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ON HORSEBACK THROUGH ASIA MINOR.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

It has been said that a man often writes his book first, his preface last. The author of this work is no exception to the general rule. These volumes contain an account of a journey on horseback through Asia Minor. I was five months in that country, and traversed a district extending over 2000 miles. My limited leave of absence prevented me from staying more than a few days at the important towns which lay on the route.

Although unable to learn so much as was to be desired of the ways and mode of life of the various inhabitants of Anatolia, I had the opportunity of talking to every class of society with reference to the questions of the day—the Conference, and the impending war with Russia. Pachas, farmers,

peasants, all of them had something to say about these subjects.

I met people of many different races: Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Turkomans, Circassians, Kurds, and Persians. They almost invariably received me very hospitably.

The remarks which were made by the Mohammedans about the Christians, and by the Armenians about the Turks and Russians, sometimes interested me. I have thought that they might interest the public.

The impression formed in my own mind as to the probable result of the war between Russia and Turkey was decidedly unfavourable to the latter power. Since this work has been written the soldiers of the Crescent have gallantly withstood their foe. My reasons for arriving at the above-mentioned opinion will be found in these volumes. They merely contain a sort of verbal photograph—if the reader will allow me to use the expression—of what I saw and heard during the journey.

A few official reports, referring to the treatment of the members of the United Greek Christians by the Russian authorities will be seen in the

Appendices, and amongst other matter a document brought to England by two Circassian Chiefs. It relates to the invasion of Circassia by the Russians. There are also some march routes and descriptions of various districts, taken and translated from different military works.

THE AUTHOR.

SOMERBY HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE,
September, 1877.

INTRODUCTION.

It was the autumn of 1876: I had not as yet determined where to spend my winter leave of absence. There was a great deal of excitement in England; the news of some terrible massacres in Bulgaria had thoroughly aroused the public. The indignation against the perpetrators of these awful crimes became still more violent, when it was remembered that the Turkish Government had repudiated its loans, and that more than a hundred millions sterling had gone for ever from the pockets of the British tax-payer. This was very annoying.

We were on the eve of an important election.[1] Some people declared that our Government might have prevented the massacres in Bulgaria; others, that an ostentatious protection had been shown to Turkey, and that Europe had been wantonly disturbed through the instrumentality of our Ministry.

Illustrious statesmen, who were solacing themselves after the toils of the session, by meandering through the rural districts on bicycles, or by felling timber in sylvan groves, hurried up to town.

Two letters appeared in the columns of the leading journal signed by gentlemen belonging to the Church of England, saying that they had seen Christians impaled by the Turks.

Pamphlets were written and speeches made in which the subjects of the Sultan were held up to universal execration. Several distinguished Russians, who happened at that time to be in England, threw oil on the flames which had been kindled.

Ladies, like Madame de Lievens, of whom the late Duke of Wellington wrote,[2] went from *salon* to *salon* and extolled the Christian motives of the Tzar. This feminine eloquence proved too much for a few of our legislators, who, like Lord Grey in the year 1829, entertained some old opposition opinions of Mr. Fox's, that "the Turks ought to be driven out of Europe."

It was difficult to arrive at the truth amidst all

[2] *Vide* Correspondence of the late Duke of Wellington, letter to the Earl of Aberdeen, *dated* Walmer Castle, July 29th, 1829.

the turmoil which prevailed. Were the Turks such awful scoundrels? Had the reverend gentlemen, to whom I have already alluded, really seen Christians impaled, or were these clergymen under the influence of a hallucination? There was one way to satisfy my own mind as to whether the subjects of the Porte were so cruel as they had been described. I determined to travel in Asia Minor; for there I should be with Turks who are far removed from any European supervision. Should I not behold Christians impaled and wriggling like worms on hooks in every high road of Armenia, or find an Inquisition and a weekly *auto da fé* the amusement of the Mohammedans at Van?

Judging from the pamphlets which were continually being written about the inhuman nature of the Turks, this was not at all improbable. I should also have the opportunity of seeing something of the country between the Russo-Turkish frontier and Scutari.

It was the beginning of November. My leave of absence would commence towards the middle of the month. It was time to make preparations for the journey. On this occasion I determined to take an English servant, a faithful fellow, who had been with me in many parts of the world.

Before leaving London I thought that it might be as well to write to the Turkish Ambassador, and ask him if there would be any objection on the part of the authorities in Constantinople to my proposed journey in Asia Minor, at the same time saying that in the event of my obtaining the permission to travel in Anatolia, I should be much obliged to His Excellency if he could supply me with the requisite passport. To this letter I received, by return of post, the most courteous reply. I was informed that every Englishman could travel where he liked in the Turkish Empire, and that nothing was required but the ordinary foreign office passport, one of which His Excellency enclosed.

In the meantime I read all the books I could find which treated of Asia Minor. According to the works of those travellers who have been to Armenia in the winter, the cold would be very great. Indeed Tournefort found the wells in Erzeroum frozen over in July. Milner in his "History of the Turkish Empire," remarks of the mountainous district in Armenia, "Throughout this high region no one thinks, except under most urgent necessity, of travelling for eight months in the year, owing to the snow, ice, and intense cold."

Regimental duty detained me in England during the summer. I could only avail myself of the winter for my journey. I had experienced the cold of the Kirghiz steppes in December and January, 1876, and was of opinion that the clothes which would keep a man alive in the deserts of Tartary, would more than protect him against the climate of Kurdistan. For shooting purposes I determined to take a little single Express rifle, made by Henry, and a No. 12 smooth-bore. A small stock of medicines was put in my saddle-bags in the event of any illness on the road.

My arrangements were completed. I was ready to start.

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A S I A M I N O
A MAP OF
CAPT. BURNABY'S ROUTE

ON HORSEBACK THROUGH ASIA MINOR.

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"BE quick, sir; you have no time to lose!" cried an officious porter in the Charing Cross Station, as he bustled me into a first-class carriage; and I found myself in the same compartment with a Queen's messenger bound for St. Petersburg. Time fled rapidly by, and I had hardly realized to

myself that London was left behind, ere I was walking down those very uncomfortable steps which lead to the Calais boat. A rough passage with a number of Gauls, who all talked loud at starting, but whose conversation gradually died away in mournful strains, and we steamed into Calais harbour; five hours later I was having my luggage examined in the waiting-room in Paris.

"Sir, they ain't found the cartridges, for I took good care to mix them up with the medicine bottles," whispered my servant Radford, as he mounted the box of our fiacre, and I drove away to a hotel, somewhat relieved in my mind, as I was not quite sure whether carrying loaded cartridges is permitted on the Chemin de Fer du Nord. I did not remain long in Paris. The 2000 miles ride which lay before me across Asia Minor would take up every day of my leave. There was no time to lose, and in a very few hours I was in a railway station taking tickets for Marseilles. The night mail was just about to start. There were none but first-class carriages. The result was that servants and masters had to travel together.

"You will sit in that carriage," said an obese and rubicund Englishman to his groom, point-

ing to my compartment; "I cannot go with servants;"—and he entered another carriage. Farther on I saw the portly personage in the refreshment-room at Dijon. He was talking to a little Frenchman, and apparently on the best of terms with him. The sound of their voices was mingled with the jingling of glasses and the clinking of knives and forks. Every one was eating as fast as he could. The waiters were serving the different travellers with lightning rapidity, and the proprietor of the buffet was calling out from time to time in a deep bass voice,—

"Ne vous pressez pas, messieurs. Il y a encore 10 minutes avant le départ du train."

"Who is the little man?" I inquired of a talkative Yankee who was sitting by my side during the *table d'hôte*.

"He, sir? He is my cook, and I am taking him with me to Nice."

The obese Englishman heard the remark, and became more rubicund than before.

"I reckon I have collapsed him," muttered the American. "If I have to travel with his darned servant, I don't see why he should not travel with mine."

The train rattled on. Each man in our crowded compartment tried to compose himself to sleep;

the red light from the American's cigar gradually died away, and the individual himself, coolly lolling his head on his neighbour's shoulder, sank into semi-unconsciousness.

The morn broke bright and glorious. Winter was left behind; we were in the land of orange-trees and olives.

The steamer for Constantinople started at four o'clock that afternoon, so we drove straight from the station in Marseilles to the harbour. Here I found a splendid vessel belonging to Les Messageries Maritimes, and which was already getting up steam. The captain was bustling about, giving orders. The crew were hauling in the ponderous anchors.

There were not many passengers on board; only a silk merchant from Lyons, a rabid republican, and a pretty Greek girl,—a friend of Madame Ignatieff, the wife of the Russian ambassador at Constantinople,—who, after paying a visit to some friends in Paris, was again on her way to Constantinople. Our vessel was soon steaming ahead. She ploughed her way splendidly through the waters, and hardly a motion could be perceived inside the spacious saloon which formed the dining-room of the passengers. We were but a small party. The captain, a cheery tar who had

been in every part of the world, and knew more stories about the unguardedness of the fair sex than perhaps any other mortal living. The doctor, a somewhat bilious and elderly gentleman, who became easily excited on all religious questions, and gave short dissertations between the courses on the respective merits of medicine and Christianity. The silk-merchant, who cursed the empire, and then informed us that trade had never been so flourishing as under Napoleon's rule. Presently he told me in a whisper that some Frenchmen wished for another Emperor, and he concluded, with an oath, that if there were, he would head a revolution and sacrifice his own life—yes, his own life!—sooner than that the Prince Imperial should sit upon the throne of France.

We steam into the bay of Smyrna; the picturesque and undulating coast is shaded in a framework of azure clouds; the sea, blue as lapis lazuli, is dotted with numerous vessels; flags of almost every nation in the world float in the balmy air; the clean white houses, with their many-coloured wooden shutters, brighten up the glorious landscape; and boatmen, dressed in garbs of many hues and fashions, throng the sides of our vessel.

"I am going on shore," said the silk-merchant,

who was surrounded by a crowd of vociferous Greeks. "Our steamer will not start for several hours. Let us dine in a café, and see if the fair sex in this part of Turkey is as beautiful as some travellers would have us believe."

I accepted his proposal, and we walked through the streets of Smyrna. The town, clean as it looked from the harbour, proved to be a hideous deception. The streets were narrow and dirty, and the odour which everywhere met our olfactory nerves, was strongly suggestive of typhus. Women were seated in the *patios* or open courts of the houses, and the Greek ladies in Smyrna are evidently not shy. They boldly returned the inquisitive glances of my companion and myself, and appeared rather pleased than otherwise at our curiosity.

"Well, I can't say much for their beauty," observed my companion. "They have good eyes and hair, but all of them look as if they had not washed their faces for at least a fortnight. Come along and smoke a Nargileh. If there is one thing I love, it is a Nargileh, and when I am inhaling the tobacco I imagine myself to be a Pacha surrounded by my seraglio."

We turned into a café; it was surrounded by a large garden. Some Greek merchants were

playing at dominoes; an Italian prima donna, who might have been any age from seventy to a hundred, was singing a popular air; men with game and fish for sale walked up and down, regardless of interrupting the ancient vocalist, and offered their wares to the visitors. Presently my companion moved uneasily in his chair; some drops of perspiration stood on his forehead, and his face was becoming rapidly green under the influence of the Turkish Nargileh.

"I think I have had enough," he remarked. "The room is very hot. *Au revoir.*" And he returned to our vessel.

In the meantime I proceeded to call upon a friend in the town. This gentleman informed me that the Christians and Turks in Smyrna were on the best of terms; however, he added that certain papers, believed to be in Russian pay, were constantly announcing that there would shortly be a massacre of the Christians; it was said that this was done to excite bad blood between the two sects.

The shrill sound of the steamer's whistle announced that she was getting up steam. Hastily retracing my steps, I arrived on board just as the crew were weighing anchor. The original number of passengers had by this time received a considerable addition. Greeks, Armenians, and Turks

were walking about or lying stretched along the deck. Women and children were huddled up in close proximity with the men. A Babel of different languages was going on around me, and an old Greek woman was having an animated squabble with one of the ship's officers, the subject of discussion being as to whether the ancient female had paid the proper fare. The French officer could speak but little Greek, and the shrill-voiced dame no French; in consequence of this it was difficult for them to arrive at any satisfactory solution of the matter.

A Pacha, his son, and the chief of the telegraphs, were the only first-class passengers. However, four ladies, the Pacha's seraglio, had been accommodated on the deck; they were reclining on some cushions in close juxtaposition with their attendant—a negro. The voice of this sable gentleman was pitched in a feminine key; he was busily engaged in arranging some pillows beneath the stoutest of the ladies—a comely dame who would have turned the scale at probably sixteen stone. Two pointer dogs in a large hamper which was directed to a Bey in Constantinople, added their barking to the general clamour; some horses, bound to Stamboul, were fastened by head-collars to the bulwarks, no horse-boxes

being provided. Farther on, and towards the steerage end of the vessel, were 500 recruits, on their way to Servia, in high spirits at the idea of shortly encountering the Russians.

It was a lovely evening; I walked along the deck with the captain, gazing curiously at his motley passengers. The stars shone bright, as became an Eastern clime; a gradually freshening breeze for the moment had cleared the horizon.

"We shall have an easy passage," I remarked.

"Yes, for good sailors," was the reply; "but it will be a little rough for those poor women,"—pointing to the paçha's harem—"and for the half-clad recruits yonder."

The latter did not seem to anticipate the treat that was in store for them. They were scattered in groups about the deck, many of them squatting upon their haunches, and attired for the most part in rags and many-coloured patchwork.

Presently a doleful melody was heard; the dirge which reached our ears told us of the readiness of these embryo warriors to meet the foe and die for the sake of Islam.

"They will die quite soon enough," remarked the captain drily, as the last verse died away. "Look down there," he added, pointing to the ship's hold; "our vessel is laden with 300 tons

of lead, and once a week for several months past the steamers belonging to the Messageries Maritimes have been freighted with a similar cargo. This is all going to Odessa. It will be odd if some of the lead does not soon find its way back to the true believers, in the shape of bullets."

"The Russian Government is putting itself to great expense," he continued; "however, there are people so silly as to think that Gortschakoff wishes for peace; and in spite of all his preparations they actually believe in the Conference!"

The captain now left me, but I remained on deck. The freshening gale gradually imparted an oscillating movement to our steamer. The rain fell in large drops. Some of the sailors covered the ladies of the harem with an awning. The horses began to kick, and the dogs in the hamper to bark. A melancholy groan could be heard from that part of the vessel appropriated by the soldiers. The first to succumb was the fat woman; in despairing tones she called for assistance. The black attendant rushed to the rescue and convulsively grasped the lady's head. It was a funny spectacle—that enormous pumpkin-shaped face supported by two black hands. The now hazy moon cast a shadowy

beam on the negro's countenance: from black it changed to green; it assumed a diabolical expression. The vessel lurched; he lost his balance; dropping his mistress's head, he fell down upon the pointers. They set up a savage growl. The eunuch started to his feet; his hair bristled with alarm; he felt himself all over. However, there was no damage done, and with a sorrowful mien he returned to the side of his mistress.

CHAPTER II.

The Bosphorus—The commissionnaires—Nothing like the Hôtel de Luxembourg—Perdrix aux truffes—Baksheesh—Officials in the custom-house—A rickety old carriage—A Turkish Café Chantant—A vocalist—Sultan Abdul Aziz—His kismet—We are all under the influence of destiny—"Great Sultan, rest in peace!"—Did Sultan Abdul Aziz really kill himself?—The popular belief—He had agreed to sell the fleet to Russia—A Russian force to garrison Constantinople—Two of the secret police—The other verse—The audience—Too much liberty in Constantinople—English newspapers, hostile to Turkey, sold at every bookstall—An English army of occupation in Constantinople—No gold; nothing but paper—Trade paralyzed—In search of a servant—A Mohammedan servant; his costume—A coachman to a Pacha—Buffaloes as a means of locomotion—Mr. Schuyler—Mr. Gallenga—Our consul at Belgrade—Mr. Sala—The stations along the Russian line crowded with troops—Mr. McGahan very popular with the Christians—The Turkish newspapers—A ruse on the part of England—An English officer—A strategic position—Some influential Armenians—"We have no wish to become Russian subjects"—The Catholics in Poland—Similar treatment required for all sects—The word of a Christian in a court of law—

An Armenian priest—From Scutari to Kars—The road blocked by snow—The dread of being seen speaking to a European.

THE following morning my servant awoke me with the announcement that we had arrived in the Bosphorus, and that he had not been able to eat his supper. By this last piece of intelligence he wished to convey to my mind that the storm had been more than usually violent. I was soon dressed, and, going on deck, found it crowded with interpreters from the different hotels. During previous sojourns in Constantinople, I had learnt by experience the discomfort of some of the purely British establishments. I had made up my mind on this occasion to try a French hotel. My hands were filled with cards announcing the merits of the different inns. The commissionnaires were deafening me with their shouts, each man bawling louder than his fellow, when the silk-merchant declared in a loud voice that there was nothing like the Hôtel de Luxembourg, and he added that the *perdrix aux truffes* and the *vol-au-vent à la financière*, as supplied by the chef of that establishment, were something—yes, something; and he kissed the tips of his fingers as he made the last remark, so as to show his appreciation of the exquisiteness of those dishes.

"Perhaps the gentlemen do not wish their luggage examined?" said an officious Greek, the commissionnaire of the Luxembourg. "I will give a baksheesh to the officials in the custom-house, and they will pass the luggage at once. But if we do not give them any money," he added, with a knowing grin, "they will detain you at least an hour, and rumple all the shirts in your portmanteaus."

"Will it be much money?" inquired my companion, who, very reluctant to open his purse-strings, was equally averse to having his shirt-fronts rumpled.

"No, sir, leave it to me," replied the Greek, with an air of great importance.

"I know that this scoundrel will rob us!" ejaculated the silk-merchant. "But we are in his hands. We must pay, whether we like it or not."

We arrived at the custom-house. An elderly official approached the Greek, and, pointing to us, said something in his ear.

"We shall be robbed, I know we shall," muttered my companion excitedly. "If I could only speak the language, I would just give that official a piece of my mind."

The Greek now put some money into the inspec-

tor's hand, and the latter, opening and shutting a hat-case, announced that the examination was over. Some porters carried our luggage up the steep hill which led from the port to Pera. We followed in a rickety old carriage. The springs were very weak, and the vehicle rolled from side to side as our horses panted along the wretchedly dirty street. Presently, to the relief of my companion and self, who were neither of us feather weights, the driver pulled up at our destination.

In the evening I went to a Turkish Café Chantant. It was a curious sight. Solemn-looking Turks were seated round the room, each man smoking his Nargileh. Little active-looking Greeks with cigarettes in their mouths, were eagerly reading the most recent telegrams, and discussing the chances of peace or war. In the interval between the songs a small knot of younger Turks loudly applauded a vocalist. The latter then began to sing about Sultan Abdul Aziz, of all his glory, and how at last pride turned his head. He did foolish things, went mad, and killed himself. "But it was not his fault," continued the singer, in another verse, "it was his kismet. If he had been destined to die a natural death, or on the battle-field, he would have done so. We are all under the influence of destiny. Sultans are like

the rest of the world. Great Sultan, rest in peace!"

I had the good fortune to be accompanied by a friend, an old resident in Constantinople. He was a perfect master of Turkish, and he readily translated to me each verse of the song.

"What is your opinion about Abdul Aziz's death?" I inquired of my companion, as the last strains of the melody died away. "Did he really kill himself, as the world would have us believe? or did some one else save him the trouble?"

My companion laughed ironically, paused for a few moments, and then remarked,—

"No one knows the exact facts of the case, but the popular belief is that he was assassinated. Indeed, the Turks say that he had agreed to sell the fleet to Russia, and had consented to allow a Russian force to garrison Constantinople."

"There is no doubt of one thing," continued my friend, "viz. that the late Sultan was thoroughly under Ignatieff's thumb. The ambassador could do what he liked with him. The Softas found it out, and feared the consequences. From these facts the public have jumped to the conclusion that he was assassinated."

"But look," added my companion, pointing to two men in the corner of the room, "there

are two of the secret police. If they were not here, we should very likely have had another verse or so, more explicit as to the Sultan's fate. The audience would have been delighted if the singer had given us the popular version of Abdul Aziz's death."

"Are there many secret police?" I inquired.

"No, there is, if anything, too much liberty in Constantinople; the papers write what they like, and abuse the Government freely, hardly any of them being suppressed in consequence, whilst some English newspapers which are more bitter against Turkey than even the Russian journals, are sold at every bookstall."

"Do you think that there is any chance of another massacre of Christians?" I remarked.

"Not the slightest; that is to say, if Ignatieff does not arrange one for some political purpose. The Turks and Christians get on very well together here, whatever they may do in other parts of the country. However, there is one thing which would be very popular with all classes, and that is, an English army of occupation in Constantinople."

"Why so?" I inquired.

"Because this would bring some gold into the country. We have now nothing but paper. Your

people would spend money, and business would go on better. Why, for the last six months trade has been almost paralyzed. In fact, to tell you the truth, all classes would be very glad to see the English at Constantinople. Not for the sake of your good system of government, as you flatter yourselves in London, or through fear of being massacred by Bashi Bazouks, but simply because you have gold. Unless you bring us some, we shall all soon be ruined."

On the following day I informed the proprietor of the hotel that I wanted a servant who could speak Turkish, to accompany me during my journey. The moment that this became known I was beset by all sorts of individuals, Armenians and Greeks, eager to offer their services. Each man brought his testimonials, and declared that he was the only honest man in Constantinople, and that all the other applicants were thieves, and would certainly rob me. If ever I appeared to have a predilection for one of the candidates, I was immediately informed by the others that the man had been in prison for six months, or else that he was suspected of murder.

In consequence of this I determined to follow the advice of an Englishman who knew Turkey well, and take a Mohammedan servant, who could

speak no other language than his own. In that case he would be less likely to have learned any bad habits from the Armenians, and at the same time I should be compelled to speak to him in Turkish, and thus improve my knowledge of that language.

The next morning a Turk came to the hotel, and offered himself for the situation. He was dressed in the Circassian style, and wore a short brown serge jacket, dotted across the breast with empty cartridge cases. His head was covered by a red fez or cap, encircled by a green turban. A loose pair of light blue trousers, fastened at the waist by a crimson sash, and a pair of boots, half-way up the knee, completed his attire. He was a tall, fine-looking fellow, and said that he had previously been coachman to a Pacha, that he was a good groom, and would be faithful to me as an Arab steed to his Arab master. It was a pretty speech, but as I had seen some horses in the desert which invariably kicked whenever their master approached them, it did not produce the effect upon my mind which probably the faithful man desired. However I was in a hurry to get a servant; so I agreed to take the fellow, and give him 4*l.* per month and his food. In the meantime he said that he knew of some horses for sale,

and that he would bring them to the hotel in the course of a few days.

I had previously ascertained that my best plan would be to purchase a stud in Constantinople. In many parts of my proposed journey I should be off the postal track, and then it would be difficult to hire any horses—indeed it would sometimes be impossible, as the natives in certain parts of Kurdistan make use of buffaloes as a means of locomotion. I had once ridden a cow during an African journey. The motion is very uncomfortable; I had no wish to repeat the experiment with a buffalo.

Later on an invitation arrived for me to breakfast with Mr. Schuyler, the distinguished diplomatist, and the author of the highly-interesting volume, "Turkistan." On arriving at his house I found some of the guests already assembled. Amongst others, there were Mr. Gallenga, the *Times'* correspondent, and Mr. White, our consul at Belgrade.

Presently there was a ring at the bell, and who should come in but Mr. Sala, the well-known correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*. His arrival was quite an unexpected pleasure for our host. Mr. Sala had only reached Constantinople half an hour before, and had come to us straight

from the harbour. He had left England about three weeks previously, and first had gone to St. Petersburg. Here he had been introduced to several Russian journalists. He related in a very amusing way their conversation about England's policy towards Turkey, an account of which Mr. Sala had duly posted to the *Daily Telegraph*.

From St. Petersburg he had made his way to Odessa, and had come on *viâ* the Black Sea to Constantinople. He described all the stations along the Russian line as crowded with troops and blocked by military railway carriages; whilst he laughed incredulously when some of our party gave it as their opinion that the Conference would lead to peace.

Our host opined that the different representatives at the Conference would never agree, and that war would inevitably be the result. He had recently returned from a visit to Philippopolis, where he had been staying with Mr. McGahan, the gentleman who wrote such harrowing accounts of the massacres in Bulgaria to the *Daily News*. Mr. McGahan, it appeared, had made himself very useful to Lady Strangford in assisting her to distribute the funds which had been subscribed for the destitute families in the

East, and was immensely popular with the Christians.

Meanwhile the Turkish newspapers, it was said, were very divided in their opinions as to the Conference. The majority of them, however, were inclined to believe that it was a ruse of Russia to gain time for her military preparations, and of England to make Russia unpopular, and to sow discord between her and the other powers.

Later on in the day I met an English officer in the Engineers, who had come to Constantinople during his leave, and was spending his time, in company with some other officers, in surveying a position between the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea, and which is immediately in front of Constantinople. He was staying at a small village about twenty miles from Constantinople, and asked me to spend a day with him and his friends, when we could ride over the ground which he was surveying. As I was curious to see the country in that neighbourhood, I readily assented to his proposal. It was agreed that I should leave Constantinople by the seven o'clock train on the following morning, and that he should send a horse to meet me at a little station about twenty miles from the city.

Mr. Gallenga had been kind enough to give me

an introduction to some influential Armenians in Pera. On returning to my hotel I found two of these gentlemen awaiting my arrival. They were very disappointed to hear that I had engaged a Turkish servant, as they said they could have procured an honest Armenian, and they kindly volunteered to provide me with letters of recommendation to the different Armenian dignitaries in the chief towns which lay in my route.

It was easy to gather from the conversation of one of these gentlemen that he was not well-disposed to the idea of possibly one day becoming a Russian subject.

"What is your opinion of the wish which General Ignatieff is said to have expressed, about making Bulgaria independent of the Porte?" I inquired.

"That would never do," replied one of my visitors. "We have difficulty enough, as it is, in keeping our people quiet in Armenia: they will be very indignant if the Christians in Europe are granted privileges which the Armenians in Asia are not permitted to share."

"The fact is," observed the other, "that we have no wish to become Russian subjects. Should this happen, we know very well what would be the result. We should not be permitted to use our own language, and considerable pressure would be brought

to bear to induce us to change our religion. We are aware of what has been done to the Catholics in Poland;[1] we have no wish to be treated in the same manner."

"What we require is similar treatment for all sects," observed the first speaker, "and that the word of a Christian when given in a court of law should be looked upon as evidence, and in the same light as a Mohammedan's statement. If the Caimacans (Deputy Governors) and Cadis of the different towns in the interior were only compelled to do us justice in this respect, we should not have much cause to grumble. However, if the Russians were to go to Van, our fellow-countrymen would be ten times worse off than they are at present."

Just then an Armenian priest entered the room. He stooped, and was apparently on the wrong side of sixty, but he had a quick, penetrating glance, when he chose to raise his eyes from the floor, and it was evident that there was plenty of vigour in his brain, however little there might be in his body.

"This English gentleman wishes to learn some

[1] Probably referring to the treatment of the people professing the United Greek faith. See Appendices I., II., III., vol. ii. pp. 323—329.

particulars about the road to Van," observed one of the Armenians; "I want you to give him all the information in your possession."

"He will find it very difficult to reach Van at this season of the year, on account of the snow, and he will run a considerable risk of being robbed or murdered by the Kurds," replied the priest, without raising his eyes from the ground.

"Have you ever been from Scutari to Van?" I inquired.

"No, nor hardly any one else. You had better go by the Black Sea to Trebizond, ride from there to Erzeroum, and it is only twelve days from that town to Van; but you would probably find the road blocked by the snow."

It was clear that this priest could not help me much about my route, so I determined to take a map, Kiepert's Turkey in Asia, and strike a line across country as nearly as possible to Erzeroum. On arriving there I should probably be able to obtain some information about the state of the roads.

In the meantime the priest and his companions had left the hotel—not together, but one by one—as the old man remarked that this would be less likely to attract attention. Indeed subsequently, and throughout my journey, I frequently

remarked the same dread of being seen speaking to an European on the part of the Armenian priests. Whether this arises from the fact that they are afraid of being suspected of conspiring against the Turkish Government, or it is the result of a guilty conscience, I cannot say.

Armenian newspapers frequently publish news which cannot be agreeable to the Government, and they are not interfered with by the authorities.

Armenians are not thrown into prison or banished from the capital without this being at once published to the world. Then why so much timidity on the part of the Armenian priests? If they are not engaged in seeking to undermine the Government, one would have thought that they had nothing to fear.

CHAPTER III.

The porter at the hotel—A little persuasive force—Trains in Turkey are not very punctual—Two Englishmen—Snipe-shooting—The railroad takes a circuitous course—Krupp guns—The Christians are too much for the Turks in a bargain—Hadem Kui—No horse waiting—The station-master—A lanky, overgrown lad—Buyuk Checkmedge and Kara Bournu—A branch railway required—A station-master's salary—The horse—Attacked by a dog—The defence of Constantinople—A song in which the Turks delighted—Good-looking Hungarian girls—The handsome Italian—"I am not a barrel"—The song about the Turcos—Spontaneous combustion—A special Correspondent—Algeria is not Turkey, but it does not much signify.

I HAD ordered the porter at my hotel to call me early on the following morning, as the train started at seven, and it was quite half an hour's walk to the station. Luckily I awoke myself, and on looking at my watch, found it was about half-past six. Hastily dressing, I hurried down-stairs, and found the individual whose business it was to awake me, fast asleep under a billiard

table in the café belonging to the hotel. He grumbled at being disturbed, and did not fancy the idea of carrying my box to the station. It was necessary to use a little persuasive force, so, seizing a billiard cue, I gave him a violent poke in the side.

"Get up directly! I shall miss the train!"

"Please God you will not," replied the Turk, with a yawn.

I had no time to lose, so, taking the recumbent man by the collar, I lifted him bodily on his legs, put my bag in his hand, and, with another push from the billiard cue, precipitated him down the steps into the street.

"You want me to go to the station, Effendi!" said the fellow, now thoroughly aroused.

"Yes."

"But the train will be gone."

"Not if we run."

"Run!" replied the porter, very much astonished, "and what will the Effendi do?"

"Run too."

And with another thrust from the billiard cue, I started him down Pera.

Fortunately for me, trains in Turkey are not very punctual in starting. On arriving at the railway, about ten minutes past seven, I found that

I had time to take my ticket to Hadem Kui, a small station an hour and a half from Constantinople. There were two Englishmen in the same carriage as myself, one of them an old friend whose acquaintance I had made some years previous in Madrid. They intended to stop at a swamp a few miles from the city, and spend the day snipe-shooting.

Upon my remarking that the railway seemed to take a very circuitous course, my friend smiled.

"Yes," he said, "when the line was about to be constructed, the Government agreed to pay so much per mile,—the result has been that, although the country is level, the line is not quite so straight as it might be."

"Poor Turks!" said his companion, "they are always being abused by the Christians, and yet the latter make a very good thing out of them. Why, only the other day, a quantity of Krupp guns were brought here. The cost price was 150*l.* per gun, but the Turks had to pay 750*l.*"

"The Christians are too much for them in a bargain," he added.

My fellow-travellers now left the train, which had stopped at the side of a wide marsh, and before our engine was again in motion, the report

of a gun made me aware that their sport had already commenced.

Half an hour later I arrived at the little station of Hadem Kui. "Is there a horse waiting for me?" I inquired. "No," was the answer of the station-master, a Hungarian. "Can I hire an animal?" "No," was the reply. "How far is it to the village where Colonel H—— is living?" "Seven miles." "What sort of a road?" "No road at all, but deep mud up to the horse's girths." "When does the next train go back to Constantinople?" "Not till seven p.m."

I certainly did not bless my friend H——. To kick my heels about for twelve hours in a station destitute of a waiting-room, and with nothing to occupy my time, was not an agreeable prospect.

"I tell you what you had better do," said the station-master, "send a boy with a note to your friend. There is probably some misunderstanding about the horse, and the boy will be able to get to the village and back again in a few hours."

A lanky, overgrown lad volunteered to take the letter, and, tucking up his ragged trousers till his bare thighs were thoroughly exposed to view, he took off his boots, and started. In a few minutes I could see him wading through mud at least two feet deep. A heavy M. F. H. would have found

himself considerably out of his element if suddenly put down with his field and hounds in that line of country. Imagine layers of the heaviest Bedfordshire plough-fields all heaped one on the top of the other, and then you will fall short in attempting to realize the nature of the soil. If ever an invading army were to make use of the railway from Adrianople for an advance upon Constantinople, and the line between Buyuk Checkmedge on the Sea of Marmora, and Kara Bournu on the Black Sea, be selected by the Turks as a last point from which to defend the capital, the difficulty in transporting heavy guns and baggage to the centre of this position would be enormous. The defenders will have to make a small branch railway in rear of the line of defence, or it will be impossible for them to supply their army.

The station-master now invited me to sit down in his room, and wait till an answer to my note arrived. He was suffering from fever, and complained of the unhealthy nature of the soil. He could not sleep at night, and what most worried him was the incessant click of the telegraph dial. It was a very busy time, and any number of messages were always passing.

"I can read them as they pass, simply by the sound," he continued, "and that incessant click,

click, click, all night, is enough to drive a man mad. My brain aches. I toss from side to side. I see devils sitting on the telegraph-box."

"Take my word for it, sir," he added, "there is nothing which breaks a man down so quickly as being a station-master in Turkey."

"What is your salary?" I inquired.

"Only 80*l.* a year. It is not enough to keep a wife," he added. "If I had a wife the life would be easier, but there are no women here. I shall end by hanging myself upon one of my own telegraph-posts—I know I shall if I stay here much longer."

A letter now arrived from Captain F——, a friend of H——'s, to say that, in the absence of the latter, he had opened my letter, and in consequence had sent me a horse. Such a horse as he was too, with no shoulders, and only about thirteen hands high; when I mounted the animal and had let out the stirrups to their last hole they were too short. I had the cramp. When I rode without stirrups my legs were in the mud. It was a choice of evils—the cramp or the mud, and the mud gained the day.

At last I came to the little village where Colonel H—— and his friend were residing. An Armenian servant now informed me that his

master was busy surveying, but that he would soon return. The other officer, who had sent me the horse, was also out, but was shortly expected home. In about three hours both of them arrived. H—— had lost his way in the dark. He had been attacked by a dog; the savage brute had bitten his boot, and H—— had only saved himself by using his revolver. He had ordered a man to bring me a horse, but from the officer not being able to speak Turkish his instructions had been misunderstood.

The room was not a large one, and only a few feet square. There was no other, so we shared it between us, I being accommodated on the floor. We were up at daybreak, and rode over the position, a succession of rising slopes, which looked as if nature had made them especially for the defence of Constantinople. The distance from the Sea of Marmora to the Black Sea is twenty-four or twenty-five miles;[1] but each flank, being covered by lakes and rivers, could be easily watched and secured. The extent of the real fighting-ground would be by these features reduced to nine or ten miles of plain, but with favourable undulations affording a good command

[1] See Appendices XVI., XVII., on the Defences of Constantinople, vol. ii. pp. 388—399.

over the front. Batteries could be so arranged as to enfilade each other at every point, and should fifty thousand reliable troops ever make a stand at this position, it would be a very difficult one to carry.

This time my friend had mounted me on a different sort of animal to the one which I had ridden on the previous day. He was a stout grey cob, with good shoulders: when I mounted him the first thing which he did was to try and run away. I turned his head towards a neighbouring height, and let him gallop through the deep mud. To my astonishment on arriving at the summit he continued pulling. There was evidently some good stuff in that horse, and I determined to buy him. His owner was not in the village, so I left word that if he would send the cob to Constantinople, I would give 10*l.* for the animal—a very fair price taking into consideration the market price of horses in the capital.

Meantime, after having said good-bye to my hospitable entertainers, I turned my face towards the railway-station. A line of telegraph-posts served me as a guide, and I arrived at the booking-office in time to catch the train.

An acquaintance, a friend of the silk-merchant, called upon me later in the evening. He proposed that we should go together to a café, and hear a

song which a French girl sang every night, and one in which the Turks delighted.

The café, or rather music hall, was a fine building, crowded with men of all nationalities. Good-looking Hungarian and Italian girls took the place of waiters, and bustled about, receiving orders from the more than usually excited true believers. Many of the latter, in spite of the Prophet's injunction, were freely partaking of raki. Volumes of smoke from the cigarettes and chibouks of the spectators had created a dense atmosphere in the building. Some of the attendants were remarkably handsome girls. Indeed, as I subsequently learnt, the proprietor of the café would not engage an ugly woman, his idea being that the Turks, his chief customers, came quite as much to look at and talk to his waitresses, as to see the performance. It must have been a hard trial for the digestive organs of the better-looking of these girls. One in particular, a tall and very handsome Italian, with large dark eyes and an innocent expression, which probably her character belied, was in great request, the Turks always inviting her to share the raki or the coffee which she brought them. The performance lasted from eight p.m. till about two in the morning; it was a wonder that her constitution could stand the

trial. I called for a cup of coffee, and when she handed it to me, I asked in Italian what she would like for herself. The girl's eyes sparkled on being addressed in her native tongue.

"Nothing, signore," she said; "I am not a barrel, although the Turks think I am; but you are not a Turk. However, I cannot afford to offend them, for the proprietor pays us no wages; all I have is what the visitors give me. It is a dreadful life, signore. Chocolate, raki, and beer. I only sip, but I have to swallow a little all the same; then there is lemonade, coffee, mastic, and occasionally, when gentlemen like yourself come here—champagne. It is such a mixture. I have a pain sometimes," she continued, at the same time pointing to the bodice of her dress, "I wish to cry, but I have to run about, smile, wait upon the visitors, and drink with them—it is a dreadful life. Oh, if I could only return to Florence!"

A Turk seated near me, and who was eagerly gazing at the girl, made a sign to her.

"I must go," she said. "He is a friend of the proprietor—I dare not offend him."

Presently she was sipping some punch from his glass. My friend caught my eye, and laughed.

"Yes," he said, "she is adding punch to the

other mixtures. Poor child, it will be a wonder if she does not go off by spontaneous combustion some day. But, hush! the famous singer is just going to give us the song about the Turcos."

A tall and rather stout French girl now came upon the stage. Some long black tresses were hanging down her back. Her dress, which was made of white muslin, was very low in front, and a flaming red sash encircled her waist. The song had reference to the bravery of the Turcos, how they died for France, and how France loved them.

The girl had a good voice. As the last notes died away in the hall, the Turks became greatly excited. Shouts of applause resounded through the building. Close to my table were two Englishmen. One of them appeared to be a correspondent of some newspaper. His pocket-book was open on the table. He was taking notes. "Patriotic song," he remarked to his companion, "capital scene for a graphic letter—sympathy between French and Turks—you see she says France loves the Turks." "Nonsense," said his companion, "she is singing about the Turcos in Algeria, not about the Turks—you have written it all wrong." The Special changed

colour for a moment, and then muttered, "Confound it! yes! Algeria is not Turkey, but it does not much signify." And he went on writing

CHAPTER IV.

Osman—Five horses for sale—An industrious man—A cemetery—A wall-eyed Turk—A little black—"He ain't got no shoulders"—A horse with a sore back—A roarer—The blind beggars hear him coming—A Turkish horseshoe—Provisions for the journey—A prince belonging to the Russian Embassy in the hospital—A prince a boot-cleaner—Osman's relatives—The Hotel Royal—A stirrup-cup—Osman's religious scruples—The boat for Scutari—Shipping our horses—Jealous husbands—A Turk's seraglio—Was it a torpedo?—The panels of the Bey's carriage—An explosion of cartridges—Readjusting the luggage—A torrent of expletives.

THE following morning I was awoke by a tap at the door, and who should enter my room but the newly-engaged servant, Osman.

"Effendi," he said, "I have five horses for you to see. They are in a large yard close to the hotel. Splendid horses they are too. I am so industrious," he added, "the Effendi will find this out for himself soon. I am not like other Turks

—I like working; I have been running all over Constantinople after the horses, for I heard that the Effendi was in a hurry to start. When will he go and see the animals?"

About half an hour later I accompanied the industrious man to a small plot of ground not far from Pera. It was surrounded by a high wall, and, judging from the number of loose stones which lay about, had once been a cemetery. But cemetery or not it was all the same to Osman, who had not the same reverence for the dead as the rest of his countrymen.

"There are a great many stones," I observed.

"All the better, Effendi," was the reply; "we shall ride over a number of stones on the road to Kars, and a little sooner or later for the horses does not make much difference."

The steeds were now led in, accompanied by their owner, a wall-eyed Turk. They were not much to look at, if one estimated them from an English standard, but I had learnt, in previous travels that one cannot always judge of Eastern horses by their appearance. I desired my English servant, Radford, to mount the best-looking one of the lot, a little black, about fourteen hands high. He was very thin, and looked as if he had never been given a good feed of corn, but his

legs were fine and hard. He put down his feet flat when he walked, and did not go on his toes, which last is a fatal defect to a horse if about to march for many days in succession. Radford eyed the animal from head to foot.

"Lor! sir," he said, "this 'ere horse will never carry me. He ain't got no shoulders!"

"Never mind," I replied. "Jump on him and try."

There was no saddle, and my man had to mount bare back. "Very good," I added, as the animal appeared to carry his burden without any difficulty, "take him round at a hard canter."

The little brute now began to pull hard, and bounded over the rough stones in a way that showed he was well accustomed to such obstacles.

"Does he pull?" I inquired.

"Pull, sir? He pulls my harms off!"

This was enough for me, and I determined to buy the animal; as a horse that walks well, and will pull with fourteen stone on his back, is not a bad one for a long journey.

The next one produced for my inspection was covered with a rug, the other horses not being provided with any such clothing.

"What is that for?" I inquired, pointing at the cloth.

"Effendi, I put it on him because I was afraid that he might catch cold," replied the owner.

"Never mind, take it off. When I buy horses I like to see them first."

"He thinks, sir," remarked my faithful servant, "that we buy 'orses as they marry their wives—that is, without looking at them. I should not be surprised, sir, if that 'ere 'orse had a sore back."

The man's remark proved true, and on taking off the cloth a raw place of at least six inches square was exposed to view.

"He has a sore back," I remarked to the owner. "Take him away."

"Sore back! Yes, he has; it will soon get well. The Effendi would like this horse though, and he is a great friend of the horse the Effendi has just looked at—they eat out of the same manger. The Effendi had better buy him."

"Get on that little bay," I said to my servant, not paying any attention to the Turk's observation. As my man went past at a trot, I heard a sound which at once made me aware that there was something the matter with the horse's wind.

"He is a roarer," I remarked.

"Effendi, he makes a noise, but he is stout and strong. He would make a capital pack-horse."

The horse was sound in other particulars, and as

a roarer for slow marching is as good as any other animal, I determined to buy him—at the same time telling the owner that the fact of the horse's wind not being all right would considerably deteriorate from his value.

"Deteriorate from his value!" said the man, his wall-eye glaring at me ferociously. "No, Effendi, he makes a little noise, but that is nothing; he is a useful horse, and when I let him out on hire in Constantinople he never runs over the blind beggars. He gives warning of his approach, and they hear him coming."

I had by this time selected two more horses, and now came the knotty point of what price I was to give for the four.

"How much do you want for them?" I inquired.

"How much, Effendi? Sixty liras (Turkish pounds of 18*s*.) I want, and not a piastre less; even then I should be a ruined man."

"Sixty liras! Sixty dogs and sixty sons of dogs!" I replied, attempting to address him in the language easiest understood by a Turkish peasant.

"Ah! Effendi," said the horse-dealer, "you know the value. To you there is much brain, but the Effendi's eyes will show him that sixty liras

are nothing for the horses—besides, sixty liras, what are they? Sixty grains from the sand on the seashore to the gold in the Effendi's purse."

I was not going to be bamboozled in that way: taking forty liras from my pocket, I showed him the money.

"There," I said, "that is all I shall give you, and all that your horses are worth."

"Look! forty liras!" The man attempted to impart to his countenance an indignant air, but the sight of the gold was too much for him. "Only forty liras!"

"Yes," I said, "and if you will not sell them, I will buy my horses from another dealer," and I turned to go away.

"No, Effendi, do not stir!" cried the owner hastily. "But *forty* liras—let us say forty-one—one lira more—just one—for a baksheesh."

"Very well," I said, and I handed him the money.

Meantime, Osman, the Turkish servant, led my newly-acquired property to a stable which he had engaged for me in the neighbourhood.

Later on in the afternoon I received a communication from my friend H——, in which he said that he had sent the grey horse to Constantinople by the bearer of the letter, but that the owner

of the animal would not take less than sixteen liras for him. As I had thoroughly tried the animal I determined to accept the offer, and my stud was now complete.

The final preparations for the journey were soon made. All the horses were fresh shod, and now I found that a Turkish horseshoe is very different to the one which we use in this country. It consists of a thin circular piece of iron, with a very small hole in the centre, not bigger than a shilling; almost the entire surface of the hoof being thus protected by the metal.

Two English saddles were bought for myself and Radford, a Turkish saddle was provided for Osman, and two pack-saddles for the baggage-horses. Saddle-bags, corn-sacks, and nose-bags had been also purchased, and a supply of tea and such other necessaries as would be difficult to obtain when once we had quitted the capital.

Everything was now ready for the start, so I hastened to say good-bye to my numerous friends. Whilst visiting one of them—an English lady—a Russian acquaintance called upon her, to solicit subscriptions for a hospital. This building, as it appeared, was being used for all classes of patients, and a prince at the Russian Embassy was at that time occupying one of the wards.

"I went to see him yesterday," said the visitor. "He complains dreadfully of the quietness of the establishment."

"Perhaps he would like a barrel organ in the passage," observed my hostess.

"That is what I said to him," replied the lady. "If he had his own way, he would give a ball there before long."

It would rather astonish English people if they were told that a person holding the position of a Secretary of Embassy was inhabiting a building which in this country is reserved for the impecunious, but no one in Russia thinks anything of such matters; there are so many princes. Not many years ago, a prince could have been seen cleaning the visitors' boots at Dusaux's Hotel in Moscow.

It was Friday, December the 8th, 1876. I have always been a disbeliever in the sailors' superstition about leaving a port on a Friday, and although several of my friends, particularly the Greek, entreated me to postpone my departure till the following day, I determined to run the risk of offending the Fates, and at once to commence my journey.

The street in front of the Hôtel Luxembourg was filled with a crowd of idlers from an early

hour. It had been rumoured about that the Giaour was mad enough to wish to go to Kars from Scutari by land, instead of by the Black Sea and Erzeroum, and that he was about to start. The Turk had spread the news. His friends and family had come to see him off. In the meantime, he himself was busily engaged in loading the pack-horses, but occasionally found time to glance superciliously at his admiring and awe-struck relatives. At last everything was ready; giving Osman the little travelling sword, I desired him to strap it round his waist. The crowd of relations were now more excited than before. The bystanders took the liveliest interest in the proceedings. "Osman has got a sword," said one. "He is buckling it on," said another.

Osman's air of importance increased tenfold when I desired him to sling my little sporting-rifle on his shoulder. There was a faint approach to a cheer from a little boy in the crowd. This was instantly suppressed, and in the midst of all the excitement we rode down the streets of Pera.

Several friends of mine were staying at the Hôtel Royal; as we passed their windows they invited me to take a stirrup-cup, and in addition poured out a bumper for the Turk. However,

Osman could not be induced to drink. He was more particular in this respect than many of his fellow-countrymen. He handed the glass to Radford. The latter was not displeased at the Turk's religious scruples, as he thus got two glasses for himself instead of one. He at once tossed off the contents, and smiling benignantly returned the tumbler to his companion. I now shook hands with my friends at the Royal, and we continued our journey towards the port.

"Good-bye, old fellow," cried my hospitable entertainers.

"We shall meet again soon," was my answer.

"Let us hope this side of Hades," said another, and we rode onward towards Galata.

An acquaintance, a Greek gentleman, accompanied me as far as the port. Here I discovered that one boat for Scutari had just started, and that it would be at least three hours before there would be another. This threw out my plans. I had wished to march my horses about five hours that day, but in consequence of the delay, and the shortness of the evenings at this season of the year, night would be on us before we had left Scutari.

The steamer arrived. A wide platform was pushed out from the deck to the shore, and two

carriages with some horses, belonging to a Turkish Bey, were taken on board. Then came Radford and Osman, each leading two horses: I followed with the little grey. The carriages and animals belonging to the Bey were placed towards the bow of the vessel, and the other horses near the engines.

The sea was as calm as a duck-pond. In Osman's opinion it was unnecessary to tie up our steeds to the bulwarks. The animals which belonged to the Bey were simply held by their grooms, and stood quietly enough by the carriages. Everything looked *couleur de rose*, and I went up the ladder to a sort of raised deck, which arched over the place reserved for horses, cattle, and other merchandise. Here several Turkish ladies were sitting. They were engaged in sipping glasses full of water. One, who appeared to be the elder of the party, had some sugar in her pocket; producing it, she carefully sugared the tumblers of her companions, and then sugared her own. The faces of these ladies could be clearly seen through the very thin muslin texture which served them as veils. They were not prepossessing, and sadly wanted expression—a defect which I subsequently observed in almost every Turkish woman whose countenance I had the opportunity of seeing. We need not be sur-

prised at this. I have been informed by the Turks themselves that very few women, not one per 1000, can read or write. They amuse themselves with gossip and eating. Their mental faculties become absorbed. They live for the moment, and pine after the coarser and more sensual pleasures. The domestic life in a Turkish family is often not a happy one; the elder and less favoured wives hate to desperation the more attractive and younger additions to the harem. The middle-aged spouse is goaded to madness at being deprived of those favours which the more comely wife is allowed to share. She endeavours to poison her lord's ear with respect to the new arrival. The jealous husband does not know what to believe, his home becomes a pandemonium.

Suddenly a loud report, followed by another, and then another, aroused me from my reflections; a tremendous noise could be heard below our feet, and men's voices expostulating in anger.

What had happened? One of the Turkish ladies let her tumbler fall, the faces of the other passengers became white. Was it a torpedo which General Ignatieff had set to blow up the Mohammedans, or had the engine burst?

I hurried downstairs. The first thing which met my gaze was the black horse, "Obadiah"—I

had named him after a favourite old charger—lying stretched out on deck, and my English servant seated on the animal's head. Osman was holding one end of the grey horse's halter, the animal amusing himself meanwhile by lashing out with his heels at the panels of the Bey's carriage. Fortunately the other horses had remained quiet. The Bey's servants, instead of attempting to save the panels of their master's carriage, vented their wrath by numerous expletives, and were keeping as far as possible from the scene of action.

"Well, I'll be d—d!"

This ejaculation, uttered in a strong Celtic accent, attracted my attention, as I was busily engaged holding up the grey's foreleg to keep him from doing any more damage to the Bey's vehicle. The forcible exclamation issued from the lips of an engineer who happened to be engaged on board the boat.

"What has happened?" I asked.

"Happened, sir! The Lord only knows. We were down below. There was an explosion on deck. I ran upstairs and saw smoke coming out of that box. All the horses were topsy-turvy."

The box in question contained about 500 loaded cartridges, which I was taking for sporting purposes.

"What does it all mean, Radford?" I inquired.

"Lor, sir, it was that black 'orse Obadiah, as was the bottom of all the mischief. He is that artful. He stood quiet enough till we started and the paddles began to turn; he then began to kick, and frightened the grey. That 'ere Turk," pointing to Osman, "was a-praying by the side of the paddle-boxes, and not taking any account of the hanimals, drat him! Obadiah upset his pack-saddle and then stamped on the cartridge-box; some of them have gone off. Hosman left off praying and began to swear, that's all he did; and as for them there Turks in charge of the other 'orses, they did nothing. Obadiah slipped up and I sat on his head to keep him quiet."

Luckily no great damage was done except to the Bey's carriage. We commenced putting the pack-saddle on Obadiah, but before this operation was completed our vessel arrived at Scutari. The steamer would only stop a few minutes at the port. There was no time to properly arrange the baggage. The greater part of it had to be carried out by hand. A crowd of idlers stood on the shore; some of them, recognizing Osman, came to help us in adjusting the saddle, each individual offering advice as to how the baggage should be strapped to the saddle; Osman mean-

while talking to his friends about the awful danger which he had incurred, and how, had it not been for him, the steamer and all the passengers must inevitably have gone to the bottom. The Bey's carriage drove past us; the servants on the box vented their indignation at the damage done to their master's panels in some strong language. Osman answered them in a torrent of expletives, which, translated into Saxon, would frighten a Billingsgate fishwoman. The bystanders joined in the chorus, and it was some time before we were ready to start.

CHAPTER V.

Scutari—The resting-place of departed Turks—A frightened horse—Obadiah—Tea and sugar in the mud—A *rahvan*, or ambler—A runaway steed—Osman always praying whenever there is work to be done—The grave-digger—The Hammall—Radford—Through the swamp—The Khan at Moltape—A *mungo*.

THE shades of evening were falling fast as we rode through the town. Presently, leaving behind the dirty lanes and filthy streets, the main features of Scutari, we emerged upon the open country. The road was in a dreadful state, at least a foot of black mud was piled on the strata below. In order the better to avoid the dirt we rode along a raised path which overhung the highway, Osman and Radford each leading a baggage-horse. In about half an hour we arrived at a place where the highway ascended rapidly for a few hundred yards. The footpath rose yet more abruptly, and here and there large sections of it had fallen into the road below. We were

passing by the cemetery at Scutari. Thousands of grave-stones which mark the resting-place of departed Turks lay scattered here and there. A deep silence reigned around, and the place appeared a desert, tenanted only by the dead. Suddenly I heard a noise behind me; a sound of horse's hoofs striking violently against some hard substance. I looked round. The first thing which met my gaze was the horse Obadiah, the source of all our previous difficulties, with his pack-saddle under the girth. In the hurry of re-saddling him at Scutari the yarn breastplate and crupper had not been well adjusted, nor had they been properly buckled. The saddle had turned, and Obadiah was amusing himself by a second time kicking at my cartridge-boxes, gun-case, and tins of tea and sugar. Clash went his iron hoof against one of the cases, away flew the white sugar into the black mud. A bang resounded from the gun-case, and that went spinning in another direction. Fortunately the boxes of cartridges had rolled to a little distance, and were just out of reach of the now infuriated beast's heels. Osman, in a moment of fear had released the animal's halter; dismounting from his own steed, he tried to get to Obadiah's head. This was by no means an easy task; the path

was very narrow, in fact there was barely room enough for a horse to walk. To reach the pack animal it was necessary to descend to the road, which lay some feet below us, and then climb up the steep and muddy bank.

Whilst this was being done I took charge of Osman's horse, the roarer, and which he had selected for his own riding, because, he said, that the animal was a *rahvan* or ambler. He had rubbed his trousers when he made this remark, and had grinned complacently: by this gesture he sought to convey to my mind, that his skin was tender, and that he did not wish to be galled during the journey.

A noise in front now called my attention to that direction. The horse that Radford was leading had become alarmed, and in his struggles to release himself was half-way over the bank.

"Let him go!" I cried to my servant, fearing that he would be dragged over the steep incline.

Down fell the animal on his back, and all the remainder of my luggage was covered with the slimy clay. The horse was a little shaken by the fall and did not attempt to rise—he lay prostrate and helpless in the midst of the havoc which he had created. Meantime Obadiah, who had been

frightened to death by the luggage which was hanging round his heels, had kicked away his trammels. Osman approached him from the bank, and tried to get to his head. It was in vain. The horse sprang back a yard or so, plunged and kicked, then slipping like his fellow steed, he rolled down the steep. He was none the worse for the fall, and bounding on his legs, dashed headlong along the road — his saddle and everything he had previously carried lying scattered in every direction.

The sun by this time had long since set. It was nearly dark. Letting go Osman's horse, I galloped after the runaway, but it was useless; in a moment he disappeared from view. There was nothing to be done but to return to my party, and collect the luggage.

"Our fate is a bad one," said Osman. "The horse—curse his mother—has gone, what shall be done? Praise be to Allah that the Effendi is not hurt." "I have worked very hard," he added.

"It is all your fault," I remarked angrily. "It would serve you right if I were to break your head. You ought to have seen that the pack-saddle was properly put on the horse at Scutari."

"Saddle, Effendi? It was all owing to the saddle. It did not fit the horse."

"What does he say, sir?" inquired the English servant.

"Say?—confound him! he says it is the fault of the saddle."

"Saddle, sir! no, it ain't. It is all the fault of his confounded praying. Why, whenever there is any work to be done, he is always down on his knees and a-banging his head against the ground. Real hard work his praying is, sir, and no mistake. I catched him at it this morning in the hotel; then he had another turn on board the steamer—and, look, sir, there he is again. Drat him, he has taken my coat to kneel on!" And rushing up, my servant dragged his property from beneath the prostrate Mohammedan.

We were some distance from Scutari, and about two hours from Moltape, a village in which I intended to pass the night. I determined to send Osman back to the town, and desired him to hire a Hammall, or man with a baggage-horse. In the meantime, Radford and myself could keep guard over our luggage.

The night grew darker and darker. The white grave-stones could be barely discerned. Leaving my English servant to sit upon the

luggage in the road, I waded through the mud to a cleaner spot in the cemetery. Sitting down on one of the broken monuments, I awaited Osman's arrival. Presently I heard the sound of steps close behind me. The locality does not bear a good reputation, so grasping my revolver, I prepared for an attack.

"Peace be with you!" was the new comer's salutation, and in a few minutes I discovered that he was the grave-digger, or person in charge of the cemetery. His house, or hovel, was not far off, and he invited me to go there and share his fire. It would not have been safe to have left the luggage, so I declined the offer. Soon afterwards the sound of horses' hoofs in the distance announced the approach of Osman. He was accompanied by a Hammall. The latter, placing the fallen luggage upon his animal, jumped himself on the top of all.

"We had better go back to Scutari, Effendi," said Osman. "It is late; there will be no village for the next three hours. In Scutari there is good accommodation."

I had no wish to turn back. We had already lost at least half a day through Osman's stupidity; I resolved to continue the march to Moltape, and halt there for the night. Osman could start

at daybreak for Scutari, and make inquiries about the lost horse.

"Shall you find him?" I inquired of the Turk.

"Find him, Effendi? of course I shall find him. I will not eat, drink, or sleep till my lord's property is restored;" by way of substantiating this statement, Osman took a piece of bread out of his pocket and began to eat.

"Well," I observed, "you said that you were going to starve till you had found my horse, and you are eating already."

"It is bad for a man with an empty stomach to be exposed to the night air. I shall be all the better able to look for the Effendi's horse to-morrow, and please God I will find him," was the answer.

We continued our journey through the deep mud, the Hammall riding in front as guide. The moon rose and threw her pale shadows on the scene. The Hammall, who was perched up on the top of a pile of luggage, uttered, from time to time, shrill cries. Cracks from his whip resounded from the flanks of his over-taxed steed. Radford rode pensively in rear; the bowl of a short wooden pipe glared with the red-hot ashes of some tobacco. Nothing ever seemed to afflict

my English servant. I was going to Kars—well, he must go too; if I had told him that I was going up in a fire balloon, he would have been equally ready to accompany me. I wish we had four hundred thousand men like him in the British army. The soldier who will ask no questions, will go where you like, and die in his place if you tell him to do so, is preferable, in my mind, to the more educated individual who reflects, weighs probabilities, and sometimes runs away.

Now a light appeared in the distance, and then another. The swamp through which we had been riding was gradually replaced by harder soil. A few whitewashed cottages were met with at intervals along our path. Presently we rounded a corner, and a large village was exposed to view. The Hammall rode up to a house which was detached from the rest, and in the centre of the town. He leaped from his horse, and, coming to my side, held the stirrup-leather for me to dismount. We had arrived at a Khan, or resting-place for travellers. On lifting up the latch, or rather pulling at a piece of string which was used as a substitute for a handle, the door opened.

I found myself in a large, low room. So soon

as my eyes became accustomed to the dense atmosphere, I discovered that almost all the available space was filled with soldiery. On one side of the room there were a succession of broad wooden shelves, ascending towards the roof, these too were tenanted. It was difficult to put a foot down upon the floor without treading upon the face or body of some follower of the Prophet. The smell which arose from so much humanity was anything but agreeable. A *mudgo*, or circular iron pan on a tripod, was filled with burning charcoal, and placed on a stool so as to be removed from the immediate vicinity of the sleepers. It gave out a blue and sulphurous flame. The charcoal had not been properly burned through previous to being placed in the *mungo*. It added some poisonous fumes to the unhealthy atmosphere.

CHAPTER VI.

The proprietor of the establishment—*Lingua franca*—Gold, no paper—Gold a charm to the Greek—No rooms—The Onbashee—His costume—The guard-house—A queer place—"*At gitdi!* the horse has gone!"—The Pacha at Scutari—The corporal's demeanour when offered a tip—A beautiful country—The bay of Ismid—A goose plump as a Georgian woman—A Zaptieh—The chief of the telegraph department in Ismid—A grievance—The appearance of Ismid—Washing-day—The Pacha of Ismid—Mr. Gladstone—"Gladstone is what you call a Liberal, is he not?"—The Turkish debt—Russian agents bring about massacres of Christians.

THE proprietor of the establishment, a Greek, slowly raised himself from a recumbent position. His head was bound up in what appeared to be a red stocking; the toe part of this article of attire hung carelessly over his left shoulder. He was a dirty-looking little fellow, and had a large wen on one side of his forehead. Nature had determined to make him as hideous as possible, and some fellow-mortal had added to her handiwork,

for a large scar, barely cicatrized, and apparently inflicted by a knife, extended right across his face. This scar and the wen were, in the daytime, a perpetual resort for blue-bottle flies. These insects, I subsequently observed, had a great affection for the frontispiece of the proprietor.

"What do you want?" he asked in *lingua franca*, that undefined mixture of Italian, French, Greek, and Spanish, which is spoken throughout the Mediterranean.

"I want a place to sleep in."

"Place to sleep in? Sleep here," and he slowly subsided into his original position.

Osman now began to address him, and in a whining tone said that I was his Effendi, a great person with gold, not paper, in my pocket, and that I would pay liberally for accommodation. The allusion to the gold acted like a charm upon the Greek.

"Gold!" he said. "Gold! Let me see it!"

I took out a lira (Turkish pound), and spinning it carelessly in the air, let it fall on an earthenware dish. The coin gave out a metallic ring. The Greek clutched at the fallen lira; but the nimble Osman was too quick for him, and picking it up returned it to me.

"I have no rooms but this," said the proprietor eagerly; "but I have a stable. Why not sleep in

the stable? You want a stable for your horses, and I will put down some clean straw for the Effendi."

Our horses were all this time tied up to a post outside. I was on the point of accepting his offer, so as to gain shelter for them as well as for ourselves, when the door opened. A strange figure loomed in sight.

"The Onbashee (corporal)," said the proprietor in a cringing tone, springing to his feet; and seizing several soldiers who were asleep on a bench, he rolled them on to the floor, thus making room for the new arrival. The latter, a dumpy-looking man, with a fez on his head, red regimental trousers, and a short yellow dressing-gown, sat down on the bench, and beckoned to me to sit by his side. The occupants of the room by this time were thoroughly aroused. A small boy, the exact counterpart of the proprietor minus the scar and wen, speedily made some coffee. The fragrant beverage was duly handed first to the Onbashee and myself, and then to Osman and Radford, the head of the latter being in close proximity to the ceiling of the establishment.

I addressed the corporal, and told him that I was an English traveller, who wanted a night's lodging.

"English!" he cried, then springing to his feet

he respectfully saluted, and said, "I thought, Effendi, that you were an Italian or a countryman of the Greek here," pointing to the proprietor of the place. "Come along, sir," leaving the building, he led me to a small building, apparently a guard-house, for in the room below there were ten soldiers, some rifles and accoutrements being suspended on a rack on the wall. Ascending a few rickety stairs, I entered a small lobby. It was about ten feet square, and had no furniture save a wooden ledge.

"This is my room," said the Onbashee. "You and the other Englishman can sleep here. I will sleep downstairs with the men." Then bringing two blankets he threw them down on the ledge, saluted in a military fashion, and disappeared.

"Queer place, sir," said Radford, looking round. "However, it is better than the hole downstairs. Shall I sleep here, sir, or in the stable?"

"On the floor," I replied. "Go and look after the horses, and then bring up some rugs."

At daybreak Osman started for Scutari in search of the lost horse. A few hours later I took my gun, and went to see if I could find any snipe in a marsh near the town. About six p.m. Osman returned. It was easy to see from his

crestfallen face that he had heard no news of the lost Obadiah.

"*At Gitdi!* The horse has gone, Effendi," he said. "I have been to every farm-house near here, and no one has seen a black gelding with his tail cut short. Praise be to Allah that I cut all the horses' tails before starting; our animal will be different from the others in the neighbourhood, and will be easily distinguished."

"I went to the Pacha at Scutari," he added, "he has given orders to the police to search for the horse. When he is found, he will be sent after the Effendi by train to Ismid."

Gitdi (it has gone), I began to hate that word. Later on, if our tea had been stolen, Osman invariably greeted me with *gitdi*. It is the first word which a traveller in Turkey hears, he is kept in mind of it during his entire journey. There was nothing to be done but to hire another baggage-horse, and give orders for a start at daybreak.

A few minutes before leaving Moltape, I went to the corporal, and put in his hand a dollar (medjidi), in return for the accommodation he had given me. There were several soldiers present. He declined the present with a grandiose air, adding that his home was mine, and that all strangers were welcome to the abode. However, a few minutes

later, when I was alone, he approached, and putting out his hand, said, "Effendi, no one is looking, I will accept a present." Human nature in all countries is much the same. The corporal's demeanour before the soldiers much resembled that of a railway porter when offered a tip in the presence of a railway director.

We rode through a beautiful country. Our track lay across a plain. It was surrounded by undulating hills. Pretty villas with Venetian windows decked their crests. Vines, fig, and other fruit trees studded the rising slopes. A few hours later the path became very bad. We made our way across deep, half hidden ruts, which compelled us to advance with the greatest care for fear of breaking the horses' legs.

We ascend a steep incline, and then, far away in the distance, and across the bay of Ismid, are cone-shaped hills covered with fleecy snow.

The path turned, we rode along the seashore. The railway ran along the side of the track, now ascending in tortuous coils, now disappearing altogether from our view, to appear once more in the distance, and almost level with the azure deep. Not a ripple disturbed the surface of the waters; coloured rocks and stones met our gaze as we glanced into the abyss below; festoons

of variegated sea-weed hung from the rugged cliffs.

The sun's rays were fierce and scorching. In spite of its being the month of December, there was a glare as if on a July day. I was not sorry when, on reaching the crest of an adjacent hill, Osman dismounted, and suggested a halt for lunch.

"A capital spot, Effendi," he remarked, "there is a spring of fresh water, a cave, and firewood. I have a beautiful goose, plump as a Georgian woman, in the saddle-bags. My brother," pointing to Radford, "shall cook him. Our stomachs grieve now, but soon they shall be comforted."

He led the way to a sort of cavity in the rock. A fire was kindled, and the goose, the subject of Osman's admiration, was shortly simmering on the embers.

Presently the track became worse, if possible, than before. Several wooden bridges over deep and narrow gullies had to be crossed. There were no parapets to the bridges. Here and there holes a foot square let us see the stream below. Then we traversed lanes of water, in some places up to the horses' girths. The Hammall went first, and wended his way with caution. Two ditches skirted the borders of the track; the rain had fallen heavily, and had one of our horses

made a mistake or floundered, his rider would have found himself in at least six feet of water.

We were nearing Ismid, the Nicomedia of ancient history. Our tired animals seemed aware of its proximity; they quickened their pace. Very shortly afterwards we rode into the town. I had sent forward a messenger to tell the chief of the police that an English traveller was coming to Ismid, and to ask him to provide me with lodgings for the night, there being no hotels in the place.

I was met at the entrance of the town by a Zaptieh, or gendarme. Going before us, he led the way to a house kept by a Greek. Here I found two clean rooms furnished in the European fashion. The Zaptieh, after inquiring if I had any orders to give him, left the room, saying that he would report my safe arrival to the Pacha.

On the morrow I received a visit from the chief of the Telegraph department in Ismid—an Armenian who spoke French. On showing him a letter of introduction which I had received at Constantinople, for the Christian dignitaries in Ismid, he at once became very communicative, and hastened to relate a grievance which, according to him, an Armenian had lately suffered, owing to Turkish misrule. It appeared that this man had borrowed money from a Turk, and had given his wife's earrings and necklace as security for the debt. The

arrangements for the loan had been made in the presence of my informant. "But now," he continued, "comes the pith of the story. The Turk died. The Armenian, paying the debt to the dead man's heirs, asked for his wife's necklace and earrings. The Turk's family would not give them up. The Armenian appealed to the Cadi. The Cadi would not do justice, because it was the word of a Christian against the testimony of a Turk; and in such instances an Armenian's evidence goes for nothing. However," added the speaker, "I telegraphed to the authorities in Constantinople. An order at once came for justice to be done."

Later on I walked through the town. It is built in the form of a half-moon, and is erected on the heights around the shore. Tiers and tiers of houses are perched up in out-of-the-way corners. Here a solitary one stands aloof like an eagle's nest and far above its fellows. No order has been followed in the construction of these houses. Every sort of shape and pattern is to be seen. Many of them are like Swiss chalets. Their wooden walls are bright with an infinite variety of hues.

It was, apparently, a washing-day. The nether garments and shirts of Turks and Christians were suspended from every window-sill. This

apparel was of all the colours in the rainbow, and lit up the scene still more. There were a few well-built stone buildings—amongst them the palace of the Pacha. I called upon this official in the afternoon, and found him a tall, fine-looking man, considerably over six feet in height. He was seated in European fashion upon a sofa, and not squatted on the floor like some others of his countrymen who were present at the time of my visit. He spoke French fluently, and also Russian, having spent some years in the Turkish Consulate in Odessa; his residence there had not inspired him with any affection for the subjects of the Tzar, whom he cordially detested.

"Your minister, Mr. Gladstone, hates us poor Turks quite as much as the Russians do," presently remarked the Pacha.

"Mr. Gladstone is not a minister," I remarked, "he is not by any means omnipotent in England. A great many of my countrymen have already evinced their sympathy for your nation."

"Yes," said the Pacha, "that is true, they have sent medicines to our wounded soldiery. Gladstone is what you call a Liberal, is he not?"

"He is one of the leaders of the Liberal Party, and was its chief till he was turned out by the actual Government."

"Ah! I remember," said the Pacha. "He told the people of England that they must not drink after certain hours, and quarrelled with your priests. I read all about it in the newspapers. It struck me as strange conduct in a man who calls himself a 'Liberal.' Has he many friends in Parliament?"

"Yes, but not so many as formerly; his conduct about this Eastern question has drawn away some of his most influential supporters."

"Well, at all events if there is war, please God we shall be allies."

"Please God we shall," I replied devoutly.

"You know," he continued, "that we are much stronger than people in Europe believe. We can put an army of 700,000 men into the field."

"Praise be to Allah!" interrupted an elderly Turk who was squatted on the carpet, at the same time gravely stroking his white beard.

"Why is it that the people in England hate us so much?" inquired the Pacha.

"Partly on account of the excesses of your irregular soldiers in Bulgaria; but mainly because you repudiated your debt. How should you like to have lent money and then to receive no interest?"

The Pacha laughed.

"Yes, you are right. It was a great mistake. But that is all Russia's fault. Her agents brought about the revolution in the Herzegovina. Her functionaries encouraged Sultan Abdul Aziz in his extravagance, and were the main cause of the debt being repudiated. They thought that this would make us unpopular with England, and they were very right in their conjectures. There is plenty of wealth in Turkey," he continued. "If it were not for the impending war, we could pay some part of our interest now; but Russia will not let us be quiet. She compels us to keep up a large army. Her agents bring about massacres of Christians, and set the whole world against us."[1]

"If there is a war, I hope that we shall cut the throats of all the Russians," interrupted the old gentleman on the carpet.

"Allah grant that we may!" exclaimed the rest of the assembly.

Coffee and pipes were now handed round, and my interview came to an end. The Pacha having kindly given orders for a telegram to be sent to Scutari, to inquire if anything had been heard of my runaway horse.

[1] These statements of the Pacha are confirmed to some extent by two Official Reports.—*See* Appendices IV. and V. vol. ii. pp. 337, 344.

CHAPTER VII.

An Armenian Bishop—An economical refreshment—Ramazan—Smoking in the streets—The Turkish Government is not so bad—The Koran and a Christian witness—A telegram from the Pacha at Scutari—A post-horse to Sabanja—Two Zaptieh—Turkish swords—A horse lost—Four feet of mud—An ox-cart upset in the mud—Woe-begone drivers—A priest during the Carlist war—Turks and Christians have an extreme dislike to the dread ordeal—Circassian Bashi Bazouks—Women ravished and then butchered by the Russians—Sabanja—Scenery—There was to have been a railway—A mule in difficulties.

In the evening I called upon an Armenian Bishop. He lived in a quaint, old-fashioned house in the Christian quarter of the town, the Turks and Armenians inhabiting different districts in Ismid, as in many other Turkish cities. Refreshments were now brought in on a silver tray, and several kinds of jam handed round in little silver dishes. The guest taking a spoonful of jam is expected to swallow it, he then drinks a glass of water. This is an economical refreshment, a very

little jam goes a long way in the entertainment.

"How do you like it?" said one of the party.

"Very good," I replied, at the same time having that sort of feeling in my mouth which carried my memory back to boyish days, and to the grey powders which my old nurse used to administer, "very good."

"We always treat our guests in this manner," said an old Armenian pompously. "It is the custom of our nation."

Now the conversation turned upon the Turks in Ismid, and it was pleasant to hear that some of the Turkish officials were well spoken of, even by the Armenians.

"The chief of the police here is a capital fellow," observed one of the company. "During the Ramazan, one of our people was smoking in the streets, a Mohammedan went up to him and struck him with a stick. The chief of the police, who happened to be passing by, saw this. He approached and said, 'Why did you strike that man?' 'Because he was smoking during Ramazan.' 'Did he put his cigarette in your eye?' 'No.' 'Then you had no business to strike him. You shall go to prison and learn to behave better for the future?'"

"Yes," said another of the guests; "the Turkish papers published the story, and highly praised the conduct of the official."

"The Turkish Government is not so bad," observed a third gentleman. "It wishes justice to be carried out impartially throughout the empire, but, so long as the Cadis refuse to take the word of a Christian as evidence, it will be difficult for us to live with any degree of comfort."

"After all," he continued, "this is an abuse which has crept in amidst the Turkish officers. The Koran says that the testimony of a Christian witness is to be taken as evidence, but nowadays many of the Mohammedans have forgotten the Koran."

In the evening a telegram arrived from the Pacha at Scutari. It was to the effect that nothing had been heard of my horse; however, so soon as the animal was found he should be sent after me. This would have been useless. There was no rail beyond Ismid, and I intended to start the following morning. In consequence of this, I wrote to a friend at the British Embassy, to ask him, in the event of the horse being found, to have the animal sold at the market in Constantinople. Meantime I sent Osman to hire a post-horse to carry my baggage as far as Sabanja, a small

village about twenty miles from Ismid, and on the road to Angora. Just as we were leaving Ismid, two Zaptieh or mounted police rode up. They had been ordered by the Pacha to escort me as far as Sabanja. Smart-looking fellows they were, too, with light blue jackets, red trousers, and Hessian boots. Each of them carried a repeating-rifle slung across his shoulder. Revolvers were stuck in the crimson sashes which encircled their waists. Short scimitars, but with no hilt-guards to protect the hand, were slung from their sword-belts.

It is singular that the Turkish military authorities, who have adopted the modern armament in so far as fire-arms are concerned, should be still so backward in the manufacture of swords. A cavalry soldier armed with a Turkish sword without a hilt-guard would have very little chance if engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter with a dragoon supplied with one of our own weapons.

After riding for about half an hour in the direction of Sabanja, Radford—who was leading a pack-horse, remarked to Osman,—

"What have you done with the post-horse?"

The Turk did not understand the question. When it was interpreted to him, he replied,—

"The animal is in front with the Zaptieh."

As it is always as well to put a Turk's statement to the test, I determined to trot on ahead and look for myself. The Zaptieh had not seen the horse. It appeared that after loading him, Osman had started the animal, much in the same way as an Irishman does a pig, with the object of driving him before our party. We now all dispersed in different directions, and finally, after a two hours' search, discovered the animal tied up by the side of a Khan, an old woman who had observed the horse wandering about having attached him to a post.

The track now became much worse than anything I had previously seen. In many places there were quite four feet of mud. It reached our horses' girths, and with the greatest difficulty we were able to force a passage.

Presently we came to a hollow in the path. Here a cart drawn by four oxen was at a standstill. The bullocks, with only their necks and shoulders out of the mud, gazed plaintively before them. The two drivers had taken off their trousers and under-clothes; their shirts were tucked up to their armpits; they waded through the black slime, and goaded the bullocks forward.

A creeking noise was heard from the ponderous wheels. The four bullocks put forth all their

strength; it was a useless effort, one of them pulled the cart a little to one side, the next instant it was upset and half buried in the mire. The two men with naught on them save little red fez caps and with their tucked-up shirts, presented a doleful picture. They were not burdened with much flesh, and ribs and shoulder bones were prominently thrown into relief by the coating of mud which reached as high as their waists. One poor fellow, wading up to us, asked Osman to give him a light for his pipe. The other one, looking more woe-begotten, if possible, than his fellow, had no pipe, and mournfully asked for a cigarette.

"Effendi," said Osman, "this is a dreadful place. We may be upset. Our horses will not get through. Better go back to Ismid and wait there till the mud becomes hard."

"No; go on. Horses can march where bullocks cannot."

Osman turned white, he was riding a little in advance of me, and did not at all like being sent forward to experiment upon the depth of the mire.

"He is a poor creature," observed Radford, contemptuously, "Lor, sir, what else can we expect of them? They don't drink no beer. They turn hup their noses at wine. Hosman's blood

ain't no thicker than ditch-water—I will lay a pound it ain't."

Our saddle-bags were covered with mud when we gained a footing on the other side. Osman, riding up to my side, congratulated himself on having guided us through in safety.

"Your face was very white," I observed.

"Yes, Effendi, my blood had turned to milk. It was not for myself, it was for the Effendi. I thought that he might be suffocated. Osman is yours, you can do with him what you like."

All these were very pretty speeches; however, I had been sufficiently often in the East to know how to appreciate them at their true value. I felt tolerably certain that if Osman's courage was ever put to the test, he would be found to value his existence in this world more than the society of a million beautiful wives in the world to come.

After all, he would have been no exception to mankind in general. I remember during the last Carlist war hearing a story about a priest who, on the eve of an expected battle, addressed the soldiers in his battalion, and informed them that whoever was slain in the morrow's fight should sup with Nuestro Señor in Paradise. The morrow came, the battle raged, and the Carlists were beaten—the priest's battalion being the first

to run away, headed by the divine himself, who, tucking up his cassock, ran as fast as his legs could carry him. A soldier touched the reverend gentleman on the shoulder, and said, "You told us, my father, that whoever was slain in to-day's fight should sup in Paradise, but you are running away." "My son," replied the Cura, who was very much out of breath, "I, I—never sup—I suffer from a weak digestion—I only dine." Some people in England believe that a doctrine of predestination makes the Turkish soldiers indifferent to death. This may be true in a few isolated instances; but, as a rule, both Turks and Christians have an extreme dislike to the dread ordeal.

The track became firmer. We overtook some Bashi Bazouks returning from Bulgaria. They were most of them Circassians, and one could speak Russian. He was very indignant at having been ordered home, and brandishing his long lance, with bright steel point at least twelve inches long, regretted that he had lost the opportunity of transfixing a few giaour Russians.

"Did you kill many women?" I inquired.

"There were some killed," he replied. "It was a pity. We were sorry for it; but what would you have our men do? Some of their own

mothers and sisters had been ravished and then butchered by the Russians."

"Have any of your relatives been treated in this way?" I inquired.

"No," he said, "but in a village not far from Gumri, some horrible cruelties have recently taken place, many women and children were slain, and all because they wished to leave Russia and go to Turkey."

"If my mother or sister had been killed, I should not be particular as to how I avenged her," he continued. "These cowardly Russians set us the example."

There was no sort of similarity in the attire of the Bashi Bazouks. Each man had dressed himself according to his fancy; the broad sashes around their waists were stuck full of pistols and daggers. The fire-arms, too, were of the most primitive kind; some men had old-fashioned muskets of the Tower pattern, and others were armed with double-barrelled guns, which had been converted from flint to percussion. Their horses looked hard and fit for work, they were as a rule not more than fourteen hands high, and their rough shaggy coats reminded me a little of the Cossack horses which I have seen in the neighbourhood of the Don.

The scenery improves as we approach Sabanja. The flat country previously traversed gives way to rising mountains. They bound our view towards the West. On my bridle-hand is a wide lake. It lies like a mirror almost at our feet. Many coloured grasses and shrubs clothe the slopes which lead down to the limpid water. Acres upon acres of rich grass-land—such as would make the mouth of a Leicestershire farmer water with envy—surround Sabanja on every side. We ride into the village: it consists of about 200 houses, mostly built of dried mud, and with much difficulty I obtain accommodation for the night.

Long before daybreak we were in the saddle. Our road wound through mountain passes. Huge clouds of mist slowly rose from the surface of the lake: they floated away into space, and appeared like icebergs as seen in the horizon. Now we rode by a place where preparations had been made for the construction of a railway. Sleepers were lying by the side of a partly-made embankment. On inquiry, no work had been going on for two years. There was to have been a railway to Angora, but "Para yoke, there is no money," was the answer to my questions on the subject.

Presently we came up to a caravan of mules

laden with tea and bound for Angora. The road was very narrow, there was barely room for two horses abreast. One mule, turning his head towards the bank, blocked up the entire path; a blow from our Zaptieh's whip recalled him to consciousness. Backing a few yards he slipped, and rolled with his burden down the slope. The owner cursed, and the other muleteers coming up seemed rather to enjoy his discomforture.

CHAPTER VIII.

Camels—The Sakaria—Geiweh—Yakoob Khan—Kashgar—The Greeks in league with the Tzar—The Kara Su—A strategic position—Terekli—Bashi Bazouks firing at a target—The river Goonook—A black slave—Gondokoro—Abou Saood—How to become rich—Set a slave to catch a slave—*Sharab* makes one gay—Mudurlu—Absence of shops—*Toujours poulet*—English manufactures in Anatolia—A Circassian Zaptieh—A precipice—A baggage-horse upset.

THE road became more level. We encountered caravans of camels, the animals not being led by a cord attached to a peg through the nose, but by a halter loosely fastened round the neck.

They were fine beasts and covered with shaggy hair. This, I was informed, is cut off them at certain seasons in the year, and is then converted into a material for tents and rugs. Each caravan was headed by a man riding a donkey, the pace of the latter being if anything a little superior to that of the huge camels behind them.

We continued along the left bank of the river Sakaria, a rapid stream, sixty yards wide and with steep banks; presently we crossed it on a stone bridge, very much out of repair. The centre part had fallen away. This had been replaced by wooden beams covered with loose earth. Presently we came to a large valley abounding with corn, vines, and mulberry-trees, and I halted for the night in the village of Geiweh. The Mudir, a sort of local mayor, came out to meet us, and insisted that I should be his guest. He was a very communicative man, and informed me that Yakoob Khan was about to bring an army of 50,000 men to assist the Sultan.

"How will he come?" I inquired.

"By the sea," remarked my host, his geographical knowledge about Kashgar not being very extensive. He next informed me that Persia was supposed to be very friendly towards Russia, and that the Turks hated the Persians, but liked the Christians, with the exception of the Greeks, whom they believed to be in league with the Tzar.

Shortly after leaving Geiweh, the valley takes a circular form, and is at least three miles in diameter; hills with slopes well adapted for artillery fire surround it on every side. The

little stream Kara Su, which is only knee deep, traverses the district, and finds its way a few miles further down into the Sakaria. The Geiweh valley would be a magnificent position into which to entice a careless general. The exit towards the east is by a steep ravine with precipitous banks, and on the west it is blocked by the Sakaria.

We now reached Terekli, a small town with about 800 houses. Every house was full of soldiers, who were *en route* to the capital. The sun was descending over the mountain tops as we rode through the narrow streets. Hundreds of Bashi Bazouks were performing wild evolutions in the plain below; some men were firing at a target from horseback at a gallop, others whirling their rifles about to the imminent danger of the by-standers. The many coloured dresses of this guerilla soldiery and of the lookers-on, lit up the surroundings of the landscape. The wild shouts of the horsemen re-echoed over the mountains. From the distant peaks the bleating of the goats could be faintly heard, as the shepherds were driving them home for shelter. This sound was mingled with the lowing of cattle and the rippling of the stream below. It was a romantic picture. It vividly recalled to my mind some scenes in the Basque provinces during the late Carlist war.

The soldiers started at four the following morning, singing in chorus as they marched through the streets. An hour later we continued our journey through a mountainous district strewed with blocks of granite, and soon afterwards crossed the little river Goonook, another tributary of the Sakaria.[1] Here the scenery is very wild; the hills are of all shapes and forms, as if cast down at haphazard by the Titans of old. Now we find a series of natural bastions and ramparts, looking as if they had been chiselled out of the hard white rocks, and then approach a slate mountain, large black stones lying about in endless profusion. Presently we ride along a path bounded on both sides by a precipice. Our track twines like a silver thread amidst the crags which hide the way before us.

We round a corner. A small village is seen below, Torbali is reached, and a Bey, the great man of the place, invites us to share his dwelling.

A little later, a black slave brought me as a present from his master, some small trout and fresh eggs. The slave could talk Arabic. He had been born near Gondokoro, and had been kidnapped from that part of the world by a party

[1] For routes which cross the Sakaria, and traverse Asia Minor, see Appendix XIV. vol. ii. pp. 368, 370.

of Arabs under Sir Samuel Baker's *bête noir*, Abou Saood. I asked him if he would like to return to his own country.

"Yes," he said, "if the Effendi is going there with Abou Saood. We could then catch plenty of slaves."

"I know where to find them," he added, "we should soon become rich."

There is an old proverb, "Set a thief to catch a thief," but here it seemed equally applicable to slaves. I was struck by the extreme eagerness to kidnap his countrymen which was evinced by this negro gentleman.

"Well," I said, "how are you treated by your master?"

"He is a good man," was the reply, "there is plenty to eat, and not much to do."

"One thing is bad here," he added, "the master does not drink *sharab* (wine). I like *sharab*—lots of *sharab*, it makes one gay. Will the Effendi give me a little *sharab?*"

"I have not any. I do not drink myself."

"And yet you are rich," said the slave. "You have money to buy it, happy man that you are. If I were like you I would drink, drink, drink, all day and all night!"

"But Osman does not drink, he attends to the Prophet's laws."

"Osman is a horse; he does not know what is good," was the reply.

At this moment the voice of the Bey was heard. "*Gell!*" (come) resounded through the building; the negro, leaving me, hurried off to his master.

It was a nine hours' march to Mudurlu, our next halting-place, the route leading through a very mountainous district. The village, or small town, of Mudurlu contains 800 mud houses, which, at the average rate of five people to a family, would give about 4000 inhabitants. The traveller, when journeying in this part of Anatolia, is much struck by the absence of shops. He may pass through village after village, small town after small town, and, unless it be market day, he will be unable to purchase anything.

"Can I buy some meat?" I would inquire of Osman.

"We will see, Effendi. I will run to the Khan, and inquire of the people there."

This was Osman's favourite amusement. Under the pretence of making purchases, he would go to the different Khans, talk for some time to the assembled villagers about his own merits, drink several cups of coffee, and return.

"Well, where is the meat?"

"Effendi, there is no meat."

"Have you been to look?"

"Look, Effendi! My clothes are moist with perspiration. But there are some chickens; they will do for our dinner."

This was the daily food—chicken. It is not a bad diet if a man is living a sedentary life, and not taking much exercise, but after a nine hours' ride he requires something a little more nourishing. *Toujours perdrix* was too much for a French cardinal; if the holy gentleman had been riding through Turkey, he would have found *toujours poulet* an equally unsubstantial diet. A crowd assembled to see us depart. The people in Mudurlu taking as much interest in an Englishman as the inhabitants of London would take in a chimpanzee or newly arrived gorilla. Asiatics have a very high opinion of our skill as manufacturers. English goods, can be met with in almost every large town in Anatolia, and the Turks prefer English merchandise to the cheaper but inferior articles sent from Belgium or America.

The Zaptieh who went with me was a magnificent-looking fellow. Picture to yourself a tall, dark Circassian, with large piercing eyes, and carefully trimmed beard—a striking contrast to the huge white turban which surrounded his fez. He was dressed in a green jacket with red facings;

a blue waistcoat peered from beneath it, and a pair of green trousers and red leather boots covered his extremities. He was armed with a sword and revolver, and, when the road permitted, was continually exercising his horse. Now he would break into a gallop, go at headlong speed for fifty yards, then, pulling his steed almost on his haunches, he would start in another direction, and, bending from the saddle-bow, touch the ground. All this was done with the most consummate grace and ease—in fact, as if horse and rider were one.

Soon we left behind us the light sandy soil which admitted of such-like evolutions. A chain of steep heights had to be passed. The mud became at each moment deeper. The baggage animals had great difficulty in ascending with their loads. We were struggling up an almost perpendicular height. At our feet and at least forty yards below yawned a deep abyss. The path itself was in no place more than ten feet wide. The sound of an oath issuing from Osman's lips attracted my attention. One baggage-horse lay on the ground; he was kicking violently, and his head and shoulders were over the precipice. Osman had thrown my rifle into the mud, so as to be able to use his hands more

freely, and was endeavouring to make his way to the fallen animal. The Turk's high boots came half off each time he lifted his feet, owing to the sticky nature of the soil. Luckily, perhaps, for us it was so sticky, the gun-case, which was buried in the clay, kept the horse from rolling. The Circassian and Radford had time to reach his head. Pulling off the pack-saddle, they divided the luggage among the other animals. We gradually gained the summit of the hill.

CHAPTER IX.

Nalihan—Armenian, Turkish, and Circassian visitors—The state of the roads—Will there be war?—The Imaum—The Servians—A bellicose old farmer—The Armenians friends with the Russians—Sunnites and Shiites—Scenery near Nalihan—Alatai river—A Turkish counterpane—Turkish beds—Osman's *Yorgan*—Osman's wife—A girl with eyes like a hare, and plump as a turkey—The farmer's nuptial couch—An uncultivated district—An old Khan—A' refuge for travellers—An invalid soldier—A Christian would have let me die like a dog—The votaries of Christianity in the East.

It was quite dark when we reached Nalihan, a village with about 400 houses, and situated in a corn-growing district. I halted at the house of the Caimacan. He at once invited me to take up my abode there for the night. Presently several visitors appeared—Armenians, Turks, and Circassians—all eager to question the new arrival. I was seated in the place of honour, on a rug near the fire; the Caimacan, who was enveloped in a fur-lined dressing-gown, sat next me. The rest of the

company took precedence according to the amount of this world's goods which each one possessed —the man who had 100 cows being seated next to the governor, and the humble possessor of a mule or a few sheep squatting humbly by the door.

Asiatics are proverbially reticent. My visitors stared at each other, and did not say a word. At last the Caimacan broke the silence. He was wrapped up in a fur dressing-gown, and looked like an animated bundle. He gave a little cough, and then said, "Is there any news? if so tell us something." Now the inhabitants of Asia Minor do not talk about the weather—the state of the roads replaces that topic of conversation so interesting to English people.

"The roads are very bad," I replied.

To this there was no dissent, everybody chorussed the wish for a railway.

"Do you think that one will ever be made?" inquired the Caimacan.

"Probably when you have some money in the exchequer."

"We are very poor; why does not your nation lend us some gold?"

"We have already given you more than a hundred millions; with that money you might have made railways in every part of Anatolia."

"Will there be war?" asked an Imaum (priest.)

"I do not know."

"If there is," he added, "I shall go—all the Imaums will go; we will fight by the side of our countrymen. We will kill all the Muscovites."

"Has it not occurred to you," I here remarked, "that perhaps they may kill all the Turks?"

"Impossible! Allah and the Prophet are on our side; they will fight for the faithful."

"What do you think yourself?" now inquired the Caimacan; "will Russia beat us?"

"Certainly—that is, if you have no European allies."

"Why so?"

"Because, if your Government had to put out all its strength to conquer the Servians assisted by only 12,000 Russians, what opposition will it be able to make to an army of 700,000 Muscovites?"

"May their mothers be defiled!" said an old farmer. "They are always interfering with us. All my sons have gone to the war, and I—well, if the Padishah wants me, I will go too."

He was apparently an octogenarian. This announcement on his part was received with great applause by the rest of the company.

"Why do you not give the Armenians arms, and make them assist?" I inquired.

"They are friends with the Russians," said the Imaum. "They would turn against us. Have you Armenians in your country?"

"No."

"But you are a Christian, and they are Christians—you must be the same."

I now had to explain to the company that there is as much difference between an English Protestant and an Armenian Christian, as between a Sunnite and a Shiite.

"And do you hate the Armenians as much as the Shiites hate us?"

"We do not hate anybody. Our religion does not allow us to do so."

"You Christians are a strange people," said the priest, rising, he left the room, followed by the rest of the visitors.

The scenery is very lovely in this neighbourhood, and as we ascended an incline which leads in the direction of Angora, I could not help wishing that I had been born a painter, in order to have placed on canvas a picture of the landscape. A succession of hills, each one loftier than its fellow, broke upon us as we climbed the steep. They were of all forms, shades, and colours, ash-

grey, blue, vermillion, robed in imperial purple, and dotted with patches of vegetation. Our road wound amidst these chameleon-like heights. Silvery rivulets streamed down the sides of the many coloured hills. A rising sun showered its gleaming rays upon the sparkling cascades. They flashed and reflected the tints and shadows. A gurgling sound of many waters arose from the depths below.

We reach the summit of the highest hill. The scene changes. We look down upon a vast plain. It is surrounded on all sides by undulating heights. The white sandy soil of the valley throws still more into relief the many-coloured mountains. Patches of snow deck the more distant peaks. The sun is dispelling the flossy clouds which overhang the loftier crags. The filmy vapour floats away into space; caressing for a few moments the mountains' crests, it is wafted onward, and then disappears from our view.

Now we crossed a rapid stream, about thirty yards wide, and known as the Alatai river. A fragile bridge spans the waters. Soon afterwards we put up for the night at a farm-house in the village of Tchairhana. The proprietor, a jolly-looking Turk, received us very hospitably. Later on in the evening he brought me a large *yorgan*, or

Turkish counterpane, with the remark that possibly the Effendi might feel cold during the night.

The Turkish beds are very primitive; no bedstead being used. One or two mattresses are laid on the floor, the *yorgan* takes the place of sheets or blankets. It consists of a silk quilt, generally lined with linen, and stuffed with feathers. These quilts pass from father to son, and are greatly prized by the Turks. The farmer, to make me appreciate his attention the more highly, remarked that the *yorgan* had been used by his grandfather, as well as by his father on their wedding-nights, and that he himself had employed it on a similar occasion only a few weeks previously.

Osman, now interrupted the speaker with the remark that in his family there was also a wonderful *yorgan*—something quite out of the common, it was so beautiful that neither his wife nor himself liked to use it—and that this one was like a furze bush in comparison.

"So you are married, Osman?" I remarked.

"Yes; but I have not seen my wife for three years."

"Do you love her very much?"

"She is a good cook. She makes soup which

is more filling than even my brother's here," pointing to Radford.

"Is she pretty?"

"Effendi, I could not afford to marry a good-looking girl. There was one in our village—such a pretty one, with eyes like a hare and plump as a turkey—but she could not cook, and her father wanted too much for her."

"Well, what did you give for your present wife?"

"Ten liras (Turkish pounds), but she did not weigh more than forty okas (about 100 lbs). She was very cheap. However, her eyes are not quite straight, they look in different directions. But that does not signify—she can cook."

"Yes," said the farmer, "a good cook, Effendi, that is what I said to myself when I wanted a wife. Looks don't last, but cooking is an art which the Prophet himself did not despise."

I had no reason to congratulate myself on being the occupant of the farmer's nuptial couch. It was very old and very beautiful, but it was full of fleas, and they gave me no rest.

"You ought to burn that quilt," I observed next morning to the farmer; "I have not closed my eyes during the entire night."

"What, burn my grandfather's marriage *yor-*

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gan—my father's *yorgan*, and my own *yorgan!* Never, Effendi! There are fleas, it is true, but they will die, and the quilt will do for my son and his wife, if ever he has one."

The country which we next traversed was entirely uncultivated, although it would have well repaid a farmer. This, however, is the case with millions of acres in Turkey. There are no labourers. The country is depopulated to the last degree, and land which might produce wheat enough for the whole of Great Britain is left fallow.

Presently we came to an old Khan. It had been built by a former sultan, as a refuge for travellers during the winter. At this season of the year the ground is sometimes covered with snow for several weeks in succession, and travelling is very dangerous. Two soldiers were the sole tenants of the building. Whilst I was performing my ablutions in the open air, one of them came to me and asked for a little tea. His comrade was ill, and tea he thought would be good for him. I went to look at the invalid. He was lying on a dirty mattress, and was shivering violently. It was clearly a case of fever, so taking some quinine from my medicine-chest, I administered a dose, and directed his

comrade to procure a clean bed for the sufferer. The sick man was very grateful. Eagerly seizing my hand, he kissed it.

"What countryman are you?"

"I am English."

"Your religion is not that of Islam?"

"No."

"What are you?"

"I am a Protestant."

"Protestant," repeated the poor fellow, "I shall remember that."

"A Christian," he continued, "even if he had the medicine, would have let me die like a dog."

It was very clear that the sufferer had not much opinion of the Armenian and Greek Christians. But this was no solitary expressed opinion. Throughout my journey, I found Armenians and Greeks equally despised by the Mohammedans. It is a great pity that the votaries of Christianity in the East should have brought the only pure religion into so great disrepute.

CHAPTER X.

Radford and Osman—The quarrel—Do the Roossians kiss each other?—Bei Bazar—The pig tobacco—Osman's honesty—Forage for five horses—It is a good sign in a horse to be always hungry—The Tchechmet river—The Mudir at Istanos—The Cadi's mule—The tradition about Istanos—Caverns formerly inhabited by marauders—A chasm—The entrance to the caverns—A levee of the inhabitants—No newspapers in the villages—An Armenian priest—The furniture of the room—Has the Conference commenced?—What is it all about?—Russia is strong and we are weak—The other Powers are afraid of Russia—Will England be our ally?—Are the Christians tortured?—Here we get on very well with the Mussulmans—The pack-saddle.

THERE was something on my English servant's mind that evening. He did not look happy, and eyed Osman from time to time with lowering looks.

"My brother is angry with me, Effendi," said the Turk, in answer to my inquiries. "When he speaks I do not understand, when I speak he does not know what I say."

"What is the matter, Radford?" I asked.

"Please, sir, I ain't had no dinner. I did not prepare anything for you as the cook in the house was a preparing it. Well, when you had finished, and Osman had brought out the dishes, I thought that I should get something to eat. But, no sir! for Osman invited a lot of dirty Turks to come and sit round the victuals. Some of the chaps had just come out of the stable, and their hands were that dirty. Then they began a shoving them into the dishes and a licking their fingers. It turned me hup, that it did. Osman ought to know better, sir. Whenever I cooks for you I always give him a tit-bit for himself."

I now explained the matter to Osman, and at the same time informed him that in future he must look after his English companion at dinner-time. The difficulty was amicably arranged, and the two men shook hands together. Osman wishing to show his affection in a more demonstrative manner, this, however, was not appreciated by my domestic.

"Lor! how they kisses each other, just like a lot of great girls. Do the Roossians kiss each other?"

"Yes, Radford."

"They must be a poor lot then, sir. I have

always heard that one Englishman could lick two Frenchmen, and I believed it; but I'll be blessed if I could not lick half-a-dozen Roossians, if they have no more in them than these 'ere dirty Turks."

We left Bei Bazar at daybreak. Osman, as usual, did not take the trouble to lead one of the baggage-horses, but drove the animal before him. Presently we passed through a narrow passage. On each side were two walls; the pack-saddle struck against one of them, and Radford's bag, containing the article which he prized perhaps most in the world, some pig tobacco, was torn open.

"I never seed such a fellow as that Osman," exclaimed my indignant servant, "he is always a telling of us as how he is industrious, and if there is a ha'porth of work to do he will borrow a penny and give it to some chap to do the job for him. I believe, sir, as how that fellow is a cheating the horses of their forage. He told me that he fed them in the morning before I was up. He is a liar he is. I was dressed a long time before him, and when he did show himself, he was busy the whole time a praying and a doing something with a little gallipot he carries in his saddle-bags. I don't believe the horses have had a feed of corn this twenty-four hours."

I began myself to be a little sceptical about Osman's honesty. I was paying as much for the forage of the five horses as if I had been in England. The poor brutes were getting thinner every day. I determined to stop at a farmhouse and buy some barley. On giving this to the horses, they ate it ravenously, thus confirming my suspicions.

"Osman, you did not feed the horses this morning!" I exclaimed.

"Feed them, Effendi! I fed all of them!"

"But see how hungry they are, they have eaten all the barley you have just given them."

"Yes, sir, they are wonderful horses. They are always hungry. It is a good sign in a horse to be always hungry."

I was not to be taken in by this remark, and so desired Radford in future to see the horses fed. At the same time I resolved to keep a sharp look-out on Osman. It was true that a considerable portion of his time was spent in praying; however, I began to be of my English servant's opinion, that when the Turk was not engaged in prayer, he was either planning or executing a theft, and that all these devotions were performed merely with the view of throwing me off my guard.

We crossed the Tchechmet; it is a tributary of the Sakaria river, and about thirty yards wide. There was a wooden bridge over the stream, but without any parapets; the height from the water being about twelve feet. This river is fordable in many places, the banks are not precipitous, and the bottom is firm.

A messenger, sent forward from the village of Ayash, had informed the Mudir at Istanos, our next station, that an English traveller was on the road. The official, attended by the Cadi and two or three Zaptiehs, came out to meet us. All the party, with the exception of the gendarmes, were clad in long dark blue dressing-gowns, which draggled some distance below the riders' stirrups. The mule which the Cadi rode was not of a quiet disposition; from time to time he kicked as violently as a mule can kick, at his master's robe, the Cadi saving himself by clinging convulsively to the high pommel of his saddle.

Istanos is a little distance from the direct road to Angora. There was no other good halting-place in the neighbourhood, so I determined to make a slight detour and remain there for the night—the more particularly as Istanos is a village of historic fame, the tradition being

still extant, that it is the place[1] where Alexander the Great cut the Gordian knot. The village, which contains 400 houses—half belonging to Armenians, half to Turks—is on the right bank of the river Owas. A lofty rock overhangs the stream, and according to the Mudir, there were several huge caverns which in days long gone by had been inhabited by bands of marauders.

Later on, I procured a guide, and walked to the foot of the rock. A narrow pathway was cut in the solid stone. The track was not more than twelve inches wide, as we ascended it became narrower at every moment. At last we arrived at a spot where the path had given way. There was a chasm about twelve feet wide. The guide hesitated, and no wonder, for if he had essayed the leap and missed it, he must have fallen at least a hundred feet on to the crags below.

"Effendi," he said, "I will try and cross if you like, but if my foot slips I shall be killed. You can see the entrance to the caverns from the place where you are standing."

It was not possible, even if I had wished it, to pass him and try the jump myself. The sun

[1] Opinions are divided about this: some people assuring me that it happened at Ayash, others at Istanos.

was nearly down, and ere a rope could be brought, night would be upon us. Reluctantly I retraced my steps, having to go backward for some distance owing to the narrowness of the ledge. Should any other traveller chance to visit Istanos, and be able to stay there a day or two, it would be well worth his while to procure a rope and examine these, as far as I can learn, unexplored grottos.

On returning to the Mudir's house, I found a levee of the principal inhabitants, Armenians as well as Turks. I was then informed that they had come to welcome me to their village. The real reason being that they wished to hear the latest news from Constantinople. No newspapers find their way to these out-of-the-way villages. The inhabitants can only learn what is going on in the capital through the arrival of a traveller.

An old Armenian priest was one of the visitors. He sat by the side of the Mudir, on a raised platform in the centre of the room. The legs of these two gentlemen were entirely hid from view, and although the room was very chilly where I was sitting, the rest of the party did not seem to feel the low temperature. I now discovered that there was a hole in the platform. A pan of live charcoal had been placed in the recess. The

natives, enveloped in furs, and with their feet over the embers, were able to withstand the cold. The platform was partly covered with a Persian rug. A divan alongside the walls made up the furniture of the room. In the background and near the door stood the servants of the Mudir, and the less important inhabitants. It was not considered etiquette for them to sit in the presence of their superiors. They remained with arms folded and eyes bent down in token of humility. When the Mudir thought that they had humbled themselves sufficiently, he made a sign to them. They all squatted down on their haunches.

"Has the Conference commenced?" inquired the Mudir.

"Yes."

"What is it all about?" said another old Turk, the Cadi.

"It is to see if arrangements can be made so as to prevent war," I replied.

"But we do not want to go to war with any one," said the Mudir. "Russia wishes to go to war with us."

"Why is the Conference not held at St. Petersburg?" asked another of the visitors.

"Because Russia is strong and we are weak—

the other powers are afraid of Russia," said the Cadi.

"Do Englishmen like Russia?" inquired the Mudir.

"Some do, and some do not," I replied.

"Do you?"

"I like the people, but do not like the government."

"Why?"

"Because it is a despotic form of government, and in my opinion all despotisms are bad."

"I like to hear that," said the Mudir.

"So do I," said each one of the assembled guests, taking the cue from the governor.

"Will England be our ally in the case of war?" asked the Cadi.

"I do not know, but I hope so."

Some one now entered and spoke a few words to the Mudir. The latter left the room: he was followed by the rest of the visitors, with the exception of the Armenian priest.

"How do you like the Turks?" I asked.

"Very well," replied the old man, at the same time blowing his nose in his dressing-gown, pocket handkerchiefs being apparently unknown in this part of Turkey. "Here," he added, "the

population is half Armenian and half Turk, this makes a considerable difference. In other villages, where the Mohammedans outnumber the Christians, the latter sometimes suffer."

"What do you mean by suffer? Are they tortured?"

"No, never," replied the priest, "but if a Turk were to strike an Armenian, and the latter were to hit him back, all the Turks in the neighbourhood would set upon the Christian. Then, if the Christian should complain to the Mudir, the Turk would bring witnesses to say that the Armenian called him the grandson or great-grandson of a dog. The Christian's word would not be taken as evidence. But things are much better than they used to be, and here we get on well with the Mussulmans."

My English servant was very much excited that evening. At dinner-time he put down my plate with a bang on the table, and every now and then looked at Osman with an air of supreme contempt.

"What has happened?" I at last inquired. "Have you and Osman been fighting, or are you both in love with the same woman?"

"No, sir," but that Hosman he ain't taken the pack-saddle off our horse's back since we left

Scutari. Every night I tells him about it, and he takes no notice of me whatever. I expect that our oss has an awful back—a nasty unfeeling brute is Hosman, sir. How would he like a saddle on his own back night and day for fourteen days?"

"Well," I said, "go to the stable, take off the saddle, and tell me in the morning if the horse's back is sore or not."

I did not share the apprehensions of my English servant. The Turkish pack-saddle is admirably suited for a long journey. During previous expeditions in the East, I had seen some Tartars who kept their horses saddled for weeks and even months together, and all this without in any way injuring the animals. The two English riding-saddles which I had brought from Constantinople, had already proved a source of annoyance to me. Our steeds had lost a great deal of flesh, owing to the long and frequent marches, and the panels required fresh stuffing. The grey horse which I rode had been slightly rubbed. In consequence of this I had changed saddles with Osman, who was much lighter than myself. The Turkish saddle not having a panel, is better adapted for long

marches. Unfortunately it is an uncomfortable one for the horseman: my own experience being that the English saddle galls the steed, but the Turkish one the rider.

CHAPTER XI.

One lives and learns even from Turks—The Mudir's two sons —They like your nation—They remember the Crimean War —Suleiman Effendi—The Vice-Consul — The town of Angora to be illuminated — The telegram about the Constitution—What does the Constitution mean?—Suleiman Effendi on education, and on religious matters—So many roads to heaven—American missionaries—The massacres in Bulgaria—The intrigues of Russia—The Circassians hate the Russians—Circassian women butchered and ravished by the Russians—An English priest—The impalement story—The Vice-Consul's wife—A piano in Angora—Turkish ladies — A visit to the Pacha — The audience-room—The Pacha's son—Only one cannon in Angora—Twenty-five thousand men gone to the war—The clerk—The Bey's library—The new Constitution—The Bey's opinion about it—Turkey requires roads and railways —The only carriage in Angora.

"WELL, how is the animal's back?" I inquired of Radford, when he awoke me the next morning.

"I can't make it out, sir. I took the saddle off, and our horse ain't touched at all. Osman came in when I was a looking at him. He

laughed and said 'Eyi' (good), and I said 'Eyi' too. But, sir, it is a wonder to me that the horse ain't got an awful back."

"How are you getting on with your Turkish?" I inquired.

"Capital, sir; I often have a talk with Osman, though I can't say as how we understand each other much. The fellow, he knows more about horses than I thought he did; one lives and learns, even from Turks."

We were escorted out of Istanos[1] by the Mudir and his two sons, lads of from twelve to fifteen, who had got up at daybreak to speed the Frank on his way. The Armenian priest also came to the door. In spite of the early hour, a great many inhabitants had assembled on the house-tops to have a look at the Englishman and his party.

"They like your nation," said the Mudir, as the people saluted us.

"Why so?"

"They remember the Crimean war, and think that you have come to help us against the Russians."

"I wish I had," was my answer; "but I am here only as a 'traveller.'"

[1] For military importance of this district, see Appendix XIV. vol. ii. p. 370.

We retraced our steps along the route of the previous day, marching for some time by the bank of the river. Presently I came to a well-built stone bridge. It spans the stream, which is here about forty yards wide, besides being very rapid and deep. Soon afterwards the path traversed a spacious plain, formerly the battle field of Tamerlane. At one end of this plain, and on a hill, or rather ridge of hills, is Angora. Its ruined battlements and lofty minarets stand out conspicuously. The town itself lies rather in the background and on a slope. A Zaptieh met us as we were entering a narrow street, and said that a Turkish gentleman had sent him to escort me to his house.

On we rode, through many dirty lanes, until I finally entered a wide yard. This court was overlooked by a large and handsome building.

"Suleiman Effendi lives here," said the Zaptieh.

The gentleman to whom he alluded now appeared descending some stone steps which gave access to the courtyard. He approached us, and aided me to dismount; then, taking my hand, he led me into a large room furnished with chairs, as well as with a divan, and carpeted with rich Persian rugs. Advancing to the place of honour, in the centre of the divan, he asked me to be

seated, and sat down by my side. Several of his friends being accommodated on the floor.

Suleiman Effendi was dressed in European fashion, with the exception of his fez. He had a very fair knowledge of Arabic; I soon found that he was well posted in European politics.

"I heard that an Englishman was on his way to Angora," he said, "and determined that you should be my guest. We received the news about you from Ismid."

"Are there any other Englishmen here?" I inquired.

"Only one—the Vice-Consul, a merchant: but I will send and let him know that you have arrived. In the meantime have a glass of raki." Proceeding to a cabinet in the wall, Suleiman carefully unlocked it, and produced a decanter with some glasses.

"Thanks, I do not drink spirits."

"No more do I," replied Suleiman, laughing; "only medicinally, you know;" and he drank off a bumper.

In a few minutes the English Vice-Consul arrived. He was dressed in his official uniform, and was accompanied by a young Bulgarian, who was a merchant in the same business as himself.

Mr. —— was very surprised to see an English-

man in Angora, no one of our nation having visited that town for several years past; and he informed me that a telegram had just been received from Constantinople with reference to the proclamation of a Constitution. In consequence of this the town of Angora was to be illuminated on the following evening; cannon would be fired, and the Pacha would read the telegram to the populace in the courtyard of the palace.

"What does it—the Constitution—mean?" I inquired.

"Mean?" replied the Bulgarian, who spoke English perfectly; "it means a quantity of promises which the Government will never fulfil."

"It probably means a Parliament in Constantinople," said the Consul; "but we have no particulars as yet." And, making an appointment for me to call upon him in the morning, he left the room, accompanied by the Bulgarian.

I was very much surprised at this intelligence. A Parliament in Constantinople! How would the members be chosen? and who would choose them? If universal suffrage prevailed, only one in about every 300 of the electors would be able to read or write; all of them would be ignorant of everything beyond the interests of their immediate neighbourhood.

"Is a Parliament possible here?" I inquired of my host.

"It is possible in theory, but impossible in practice,"[2] was the reply. "We require more liberty, but this must be a question of time. We must educate the people, and teach both the Christians and Mohammedans that a difference of opinion on religious matters is not a subject about which men should quarrel. Religion has been the cause of more wars than anything else in history."

"I tell you what it is," he continued, "I believe that in another hundred years there will be either no religion at all, or else that every religion will be merged into one creed."

"The Christian," I observed.

"Who knows?" continued my host. "We live in strange times; even we Turks, the more particularly those who live in Constantinople, begin to argue about such matters. However, there is one thing I cannot understand about you Christians—you appear to me to have so many roads to heaven. For instance, in Anatolia there are American Protestant missionaries,

[2] This is refuted by an Official despatch recently received from H.M.'s Ambassador at Constantinople, see Appendix IV. vol. ii. p. 342.

Italian Catholic missionaries, and then there are the Armenians, who profess the Armenian faith."

"Well," I remarked, "what of it?"

"Wait a moment," said my host. "An Armenian, who is of the Armenian faith, is halfway up his staircase to heaven. An American missionary calls after him, 'Where are you going?' 'I am going to heaven.' 'No you are not; that is not the road to heaven. You are going in the wrong direction. Come down immediately, and I will show you the way.' The Armenian descends the steps, and begins ascending the road the missionary points out to him. Presently another voice is heard. It comes from the mouth of an Italian missionary. 'Where are you going?' 'I am going to heaven.' 'No you are not; come down immediately. You are on the road to hell.'"

"The result is," continued Suleiman, "that the poor Armenian does not know which way to turn. He is perpetually going up, or coming down the steps, and he never reaches his destination."

"Stop," I said, "you Mohammedans are also split up into sects. There are the Sunnites and the Shiites, and you both hate each other."

"Alas! it is true," replied my companion, "but if we have two sects, you, according to what I

have read, number at least a hundred, and the members of many of the sects think that every one else besides themselves must be damned. A very charitable doctrine that, is it not?" he added.

"Who was the Bulgarian with our Vice-Consul?" I inquired.

"He is in business with the Vice-Consul, and, I am sorry to say, does not love us Turks."

"Why?"

"Because his brother was one of the victims in the late Bulgarian rebellion."

"People in England blame us for the massacres," continued Suleiman. "What could we do? Our regular troops were employed elsewhere. This was owing to the intrigues of Russia; we were obliged to employ Circassians. The Circassians hate the Russians, and indeed they have reason to hate them. Those whose own mothers and sisters have been ravished and butchered, cannot be expected to love their oppressors. The Circassians looked upon the Bulgarians as Russians, hence the bloodshed. A few days ago I read an extract from an English paper, which had been translated into Turkish. It was to the effect that an English priest had seen people impaled by our Bashi Bazouks. Have you heard of this?"

"Yes, but the story has been contradicted."

"It is a pity when Christian priests or Mohammedan Imaums mix themselves up in politics," remarked another Turk; "their place is to calm men's passions, not to rouse them."

They left me; my host having previously asked at what time I should like to dine, with the observation that his hour was mine. Three servants were also placed at my disposal, with orders to supply me with anything I might require.

The following morning I called upon the Vice-Consul, and found him at home with his wife—a delicate-looking lady, who had braved all the hardships of the journey from Ismid in order to be at her husband's side.

Their house was furnished with every English comfort. It was difficult to believe that we were so many days from a railroad.

"That piano cost us a great deal of trouble," said the Vice-Consul. "It was brought here in two parts, and on mules."

"It is wonderful how it could have survived the journey," said the lady. Going to the instrument, she sounded the notes, which were very fairly in tune. "The Turkish ladies are so astonished with the piano," she continued. "They will sit for hours and listen to me playing."

I now started with the Consul to pay a visit to the Pacha. We arrived in a large courtyard, which was badly paved with loose stones. At one end there were some steps which led to the official residence. The courtyard was thronged with people who had been summoned to hear the telegram read about the new Constitution; men in uniform, beggars, people with petitions in their hands, all swearing and jostling each other, as my companion and myself with difficulty made our way up the stairs. We were at once admitted into the audience-room. I found the Pacha, a tall, good-looking man of middle age, engaged in placing his seal upon a number of documents which an official was handing to him. He received us courteously, and proposed that we should accompany him to the court below, and listen to the proclamation of the Sultan's telegram.

The Pacha then introduced me to his son, a young man about twenty; he spoke French fluently and without any perceptible accent, having been educated by a French tutor.

"We have only one cannon in Angora," he remarked, "and it is to be fired 101 times. We are a little afraid that it may not be able to stand the ordeal."

"Yes," said his father, "we have only one

cannon, but we have sent 25,000 men to the war. We do not require any cannons," he added. "Our own people are quiet enough. The Russians will not find it a very easy matter to reach Angora."

We descended the steps; on reaching the courtyard, the clerk—a wonderful old gentleman in a green dressing-gown, and with a wheezy voice—called for silence.

The Pacha then announced that the Sultan had been pleased to grant more liberties to his people, and that the present autocratic form of government was to be replaced by a Constitution. The Imaum, or priest, here said "Amin," equivalent to our Amen; and the Vice-Consul put on his cap with the gilt peak, which he had taken off during the ceremony.

The Pacha's son now invited me to visit his rooms, which were a suite of apartments separate from those occupied by his father. I found his book-shelves well stored with scientific French works, and, to my surprise, discovered that the young Bey was not only remarkably well educated for a Turk, but was much better informed than nine Englishmen out of ten who have been to a public school, and have taken their degree at the university.

"Well, what do you think will be the result of the new Constitution?" I inquired.

"We are what you would call in England a very conservative nation. This sudden change has almost taken away our breath. We have not yet received the document which contains all the clauses of the new Constitution, and only know of them by telegram; if we are to attempt a form of Government such as you have in England, in my opinion we shall fail."

"Why so?" I asked.

"Because not only the electing class, but the men who will probably be chosen to sit in Parliament are only half educated. We shall have ignorant legislators legislating for an equally ignorant nation. We want time," he continued; "we require roads and railways. If there were means of communication, the people would travel and see that there is a good deal to be learnt away from home, and even from you Christians. Give us roads and railways, they will be worth fifty Constitutions, for the latter, in my opinion, will soon be found impracticable."

"It will never be carried out," said the Vice-Consul, who was sitting next to him. "It has been drawn up merely as a sop for the plenipotentiaries at the Conference."

"Well, whatever they do in other places," said the Bey, "we shall carry it out in its integrity here."

As he said these words the boom of the cannon resounded from below, the windows of the room began to rattle, the sound of a mob cheering, rapidly followed the report.

"A great deal of noise and a great deal of smoke: *voilà la Constitution*," said the Consul, and he prepared to leave the room.

"Stop," said the Bey, "you must not walk, I will send my carriage with you. It is almost the only carriage in Angora," he added, "and I have a compatriot of yours as a coachman; he has been with me three years."

CHAPTER XII.

The Pacha's carriage—The coachman an Irishman—Christmas day in Angora—The celebrities of the town—A society of thieves—Fire in Sivrisa—The Turks and the Armenians—So-called fanaticism—Ten Pachas in Angora in four years—Cases of litigation—Arrears—The firman of November, 1875—The famine in Angora—Deaths during the famine—The goats died—A Mohammedan divine—The Russian Ambassador and the secret societies—The English newspapers and the Bulgarian atrocities—A Turk values his nose quite as much as a Christian—Suleiman Effendi's wife—The Turkish law about property—A dinner with a Turkish gentleman—A mixture of nationalities—My host and his digestion—Spirits refresh the stomach—The Prophet and the old woman in Mecca—There are no old women in heaven.

THE Pacha's carriage was a funny-looking old vehicle. It gave me the idea of a broken-down four-wheeler, which had been taken to pieces and converted into an Irish car. There were no springs. My bones were nearly dislocated as we drove down the main street, to the Consul's house.

The coachman turned out to be not an Englishman, but an Irishman. He had lost all signs of the native drollery. Four years spent in Turkey seemed to have taken the life out of him. He had been sent home to Ireland during the previous summer, to buy some carriage-horses for his master. On returning with his purchases, a storm arose in the Bay of Biscay. The captain of the vessel had been obliged to order the crew to throw the horses overboard. This, and the absence of all female society, had weighed upon Paddy's mind. He only brightened up for one moment when the Consul, giving him a glass of whisky, desired him to drink it in honour of Ould Ireland and of Christmas Day. For it was Christmas Day in Angora, and the Consul's good wife was busily engaged in all the mysteries of the *cuisine*.

"You are going to dine with us to-night?" said the hospitable gentleman. "Nay, you must," he added. "We are to have a turkey stuffed with chestnuts, and my wife is busy teaching the Turkish servants how to make a plum-pudding. You will also meet some of the celebrities of Angora."

At dinner one of the guests—if I remember right, an Armenian—did not seem to share the

opinions which the Pacha had expressed that morning with reference to the quiet and good order in the city.

It appeared, according to this person, that there is a vagabond society, a society of thieves, in Angora, which preys upon Turks and Christians. The members of this society go at night to different houses, and, knocking at the door, order the proprietors, under threat of assassination, to draw the bolts. The inhabitants, who are frightened to death, frequently open the door. The thieves, entering, eat what they find in the house, and afterwards make the proprietor give them a sum of money.

"Yes," remarked another guest, "the worst of it is that several of the chief people in the town are said to be mixed up in this society."

A great fire had taken place in Sivrisa, a short time before. Damage had been done to the Christian inhabitants to the amount of thirty million piastres. The Turks did not willingly receive the Armenians into their houses, but when they did so, subsequently threw their mattresses out of the window, saying that they had been defiled by the contact of a *giaour's* body. This was mentioned to show the fanaticism of the Turks.

However, during my subsequent travels in Armenia, the impression gradually dawned upon my mind that the Turks were, first of all, very wise not to wish to receive the Armenians into their houses; and, secondly, if they had been good-natured enough to do so, to destroy the mattresses after the departure of their guests. The Armenians in their habits of body are filthy to the last degree. Their houses and clothes are infested with vermin. The Turks, on the contrary, are much cleaner, and are most particular about the use of the bath. An Englishman would not be pleased if his house became filled with what it is not here necessary to mention. If he did under such circumstances admit strangers, he would probably destroy their bedding the moment that they departed.

One of the visitors now remarked that there had been ten Pachas in four years in Angora, and that this frequent removal of officials was one of the causes which had led to the decadence of the country.

"Yes," said another, "a Pacha never feels sure of his place. Another evil here is the delay in settling cases of litigation. The arrears are enormous, and although in November, 1875, a firman from the sultan called attention to this matter, and

ordered all law cases to be settled at once, nothing has been done to carry the edict into execution. If when the Authorities find that they have a good man as a Pacha, they would leave him for say ten years in office, we should advance much more rapidly than at present."

I next heard that Angora had not recovered from the effects of the famine which had devastated the neighbourhood in 1873-74, the amount of taxes owing by the inhabitants to the Government amounting to more than a million and a half Turkish pounds. The arrears of taxes owing previous to 1872 had been cancelled, some being as much as ten, twelve, and twenty years due. Previous to cancelling the arrears, the Government had put up to auction the right of collecting the entire sum; but, as many of the inhabitants had emigrated, no one ventured to bid.

There were 18,000 deaths in the neighbourhood of the town during the famine, and 25,000 people died subsequently in consequence of its effect. The chief trade of the district is in goats' hair, 60 per cent. of the goats, sheep, and cattle had perished. Children had been deserted and left in the streets; some instances of babies being eaten by their parents were brought to light.

The following morning I received a visit from

a relative of my host, Hadji Taifik Effendi. It is said that he will one day be the head of the Mussulman faith. I found this Mohammedan divine excessively bellicose in his ideas; he eagerly desired war.

"Why so?" I inquired.

"Because an open enemy is better than a poisoner in your house. Because war must come some day, and it is better to get rid of a cancer by sacrificing a limb.[1] Russian agents have been doing their best to sow discord amongst the inhabitants of our provinces; this they did during peace time and whilst a Russian ambassador was at Constantinople."

"Yes," said my host, "and an ambassador who is himself a prime mover in the secret societies which are agitating Europe. The Russian Government pretends to be alarmed at the secret societies, but it is the hot-bed of all the secret societies in the world.[1] You may depend upon it," he continued, "that the massacres which occurred in Bulgaria had been planned long before the outbreak. Our regular troops had been purposely sent to other parts of the empire. The Russian authorities

[1] This is authenticated to a great extent by an Official Despatch. See Appendix V. vol. ii. p. 344.

were well aware of what was about to take place, and were delighted at the effect which it had upon public opinion in England. One thing, however, I cannot understand, and this is why your newspapers always published the accounts of the Bulgarian women and children who were slaughtered, and never went into any particulars about the Turkish women who were massacred by the Bulgarians, or about our soldiers whose noses were cut off, and who were mutilated by the insurgents in the Herzegovina. A Turk values his nose quite as much as a Christian," he added.

I now learned that Hadji Taifik Effendi had five wives, but that Suleiman Effendi only possessed one. She was the widow of a rich inhabitant of the town, and one day seeing Suleiman pass her windows, was struck by his appearance. She sent an old woman, as intermediary, to him. The marriage was arranged; the lady bringing all her late husband's fortune to her new spouse.

The Turkish law about the distribution of property after a man's death is rather curious. If a man dies leaving a daughter, but if at the same time he has a brother, the daughter and his brother divide the property. Should he leave two daughters and a brother, each girl takes a quarter,

his brother the half; if he has one son and a brother, the brother is left out altogether, and the son takes everything.

That evening I received an invitation to dine with a Turkish gentleman. My host was one of the guests; we went together to the place of entertainment. There was a strange mixture of nationalities, comprising Turks, Armenians, an Italian doctor, a certain M. Gasparini, who had been for some years in Angora, and was a great favourite with the inhabitants; Greeks, a Bulgarian, and our Consul, who is a Scotchman. We passed through a courtyard which surrounded the house. It was illuminated with paper lanterns of various patterns. Presently I found myself in a room surrounded by divans. The guests were all assembled. In the centre of the apartment was a table. On it were placed bottles of red and white wine of Armenian manufacture, raki, mastic, brandy, and liqueurs, whilst biscuits, nuts and filberts, with sardines, were on little dishes interspersed amidst the decanters. My host, who was a stout and very dark man, pouring out a bumper, insisted upon all the company joining him in his libations, then, turning to M. Gasparini, he complained about the state of his digestion.

"Well, if you will drink so much," said the doctor, "you ought not to expect to feel well."

"Spirits," said the fat Turk; "I like spirits—they refresh my stomach, and I become cheerful. Send me some medicine," he added.

"There is no good treating these Turks," said the doctor to me, in Italian. "They mix up everything together, wine, spirits, physic, &c., and then expect to get well. If they would only carry out their prophet's injunctions, and leave off drinking wine, they would enjoy much better health."

"Did you ever hear the story of the prophet and the old women in Mecca?" said one of the guests who was listening to the conversation.

"No, what is it?"

"Well," observed the visitor, "there is a tradition that one day an old woman came to the Prophet and said, 'Oh! only true Prophet of God, when I die, to which particular heaven shall I be sent?' The Prophet, who was continually being bothered by similar questions, and" (aside to the doctor) "whose digestion on that particular occasion was very likely out of order, replied gruffly, 'Go away, go away! There are no old women in heaven.' Upon this the aged dame left the house crying. In a short time the

Prophet's domicile was surrounded by all the ancient females in Mecca. Their cries became so loud that they attracted Mahomet's attention; he went out to them. 'Oh, holy Prophet! holy prophet!' they cried. 'Well, what do you want?' 'You have said that there are no old women in heaven. Whatever shall we do?' The Prophet was not in the least nonplussed for an answer. 'Quite true,' said Mahomet, 'quite true, I said so. There are no old women in heaven; they all become young so soon as they arrive there!'"

CHAPTER XIII.

The band—Turkish melodies—Turkish music like a Turkish dinner, it is a series of surprises—Turkish etiquette at dinner—The pack-horse is lame—The people ask for many liras—The Postmaster is in bed—The chief of the police—Horse-copers in Aleppo—The fair sex in that city—A test for lovers—We burn our fingers soon enough after marriage—Domestic life in the harems in Angora—The immorality in Yuzgat—Mr. Gasparini—Turkish hospitality—Armenians dress like Turks—Christian women—Great harmony between Turks and Christians—Armenian testimony doubtful—The prison at Sivas—Hearsay evidence—A Turkish veterinary surgeon—Horse-dealers—Two pounds offered for the horse—History of the Ottoman Empire—The Bey's present—Generosity of the Turks—The devil is not so black as he is painted.

By this time the guests had consumed many cigarettes, smoked numerous Nargilehs, and drank freely of the liqueurs. The host, rising, proposed that we should adjourn to the dining-room. There we found three musicians with instruments much resembling banjos.

"We are to have some music," said the Bey,

the Pacha's son, who was one of the guests. "I am afraid that it will not be much to your taste. Our melodies are very different to those which you are accustomed to hear in Europe."

He was quite right; Turkish melodies are very different. There is a wildness and pathos about many of them which strikes the stranger accustomed to the more regular measure which distinguishes European music. Now they resounded so plaintively that the guests involuntarily ceased talking. Another instant the instruments, bursting forth with a startling crash, half deafened us with the clamour.

The performers swung their heads from side to side, and kept time with the quickening air; the strains went faster and faster. The guests were inspired with the musicians' enthusiasm. All the heads began to swing, we Europeans involuntarily marking the time with our feet on the floor. The musicians panted with their exertions. Suddenly the melody left off abruptly, and one of the performers commenced a doleful dirge. This did not last long, and when he was in the most pathetic part, another crash from the orchestra interrupted him in the middle of a verse.

"Turkish music is exactly like a Turkish

dinner," observed one of the guests; "it is a series of surprises; the leader of the orchestra goes from *andante* to a racing pace without any *crescendo* whatsoever; the cook in the same manner—he first gives us a dish as sweet as honey, and then astonishes our stomachs with a sauce as acid as vinegar. Now we are eating fish, another instant blanc-mange. A vegetable is next placed before us, and our stomachs have scarcely recovered from their astonishment, when a sweet soup is served up with some savoury pastry."

The servants, who were much more numerous than the guests, vied with each other in serving the different dishes. Twenty attendant domestics were arranged in Indian file. So soon as the host made a sign to the leading domestic, each kind of food was replaced by another, and number-two servant was prepared with fresh viands, while number one, who had hurried to the kitchen, returned with another dish.

The table was a raised one, chairs were placed round it. This was done in honour of the European visitors. We all ate with our fingers, each man helping himself according to his rank or social position. It was not etiquette for a Cadi to seize a piece of meat before the Bey put his

fingers in the dish, a captain had to be careful not to offend the susceptibilities of a colonel.

To eat blanc-mange *à la Turque* requires some practice; however, the Consul and the Italian doctor had been for some time in the East, and used their fingers as readily as a knife and fork.

At last our dinner was over. Fruit, mince-meat, dishes of vegetables, sweets and raisins, salads and creams, concluding with a huge bowl of boiled rice, had been disposed of, the whole having been washed down by tumblers of red country wine very like Burgundy.

"Praise be to God!" said our host, rising; his example was followed by the rest of the guests.

A servant poured water over the hands of the visitors, beginning with each man according to his rank. We adjourned into another room. Here coffee, *tchibouks*, and *nargilehs* were handed round to the company.

A servant now approached, and said that Osman was waiting outside, and wished to speak to me.

"What is the matter?" I inquired. "Have you come to tell me how very industrious you are, or do you want some more money?" I had previously observed that when Osman wished to

speak to me, these two topics were almost invariably the subject of his conversation.

"No, Effendi, but the horse—"

"Which horse?"

"The bay that makes a noise."

"Well, what of him?"

"He is lame. My brother has seen him. I have seen him. He will not be able to carry his pack to-morrow."

"Hire two horses instead of one, and lead the roarer."

"Yes, Effendi, that is what I have been trying to do; but the people ask for many liras; their hearts are stony at the sight of our difficulties, they open wide their purses for the Effendi's gold."

"Have you been to the post?"

"Yes, but the postmaster has ten horses, and only one man to look after them. The postmaster says if you hire two baggage animals that you must pay for ten."

"Wait here, Osman," I said; returning to my host, I informed him of my difficulties.

"Oh! the dog!" exclaimed the Bey. "He is trying to cheat you!"

Tearing a piece of paper from an old letter in his pocket, he wrote a note to the chief of the

police, desiring him to bring the postmaster immediately before us.

"The postmaster is in bed," said Osman, who had entered the room.

"In bed or out of bed, he shall be brought here," said the young Bey, stamping the piece of paper with his seal, he gave it to a servant. Presently a noise was heard. The postmaster arrived, followed by the chief of the police.

"You must give this English gentleman two horses at once."

"Yes, Bey Effendi."

"But why did you not do so before?"

"Because I did not know that it was the Bey's pleasure—the will of the son of our Pacha is my will. Upon my head be it; the horses shall come."

"Good horses," I remarked, "stout and strong."

"Have I not said so?" replied the man, and it was agreed that I was to hire two horses as far as Yuzgat, paying the regular tariff of three piastres for each horse per hour.

"People in Turkey who deal in horses are great rogues," said the Bey; "are they the same in your country? A horse-dealer near Kars would try and get the best of his dearest friend in a bargain."

"They are much the same in England," I replied; and the young Bey began to tell us some stories of horse-copers in Aleppo, where he had passed some years, and in which town the fair sex was more than usually frail.

"The young men in that city have a curious way of showing their affection to the lady of their choice," continued the speaker. "A girl has, say, three lovers—a small allowance for a lady in that part of the world—she does not know which to select, each one of the suitors is eager to display his gallantry."

"What does she do?" asked one of the party. "Accept them all?"

"No, she takes three bits of live charcoal from out of the fire; giving each of her lovers a piece, she tells them to place it in the palms of their hands. The fire burns through the skin, the tendons are laid bare; sometimes the amorous gentlemen will resist till the flesh has been burnt to the bone. Here one or two of them generally succumb to the torture; the man who resists the longest, wins the lady."

"But if they are all equally indifferent to pain, and the charcoal burns out, what happens then?" I inquired.

"The lady takes three more pieces of charcoal,

and begins again with the other hand," replied the Bey. "The more they resist, the better the girl likes them, because it is a proof to her mind that they value her more than their own torture."

"Did you ever try it?"

"No," said the Bey, laughing. "I can get a wife without any trouble, so I do not care about burning my fingers. We burn our fingers quite soon enough after marriage, as it is."

"Yes," said the doctor, and he began to give me a long account of the domestic life in some of the harems in Angora.

According to the doctor's experiences there was a great deal of immorality amidst the fair sex in the city, although nothing to what existed in Yuzgat, another town which I should pass by on the way to Kars. In Angora, although the women are very unfaithful to their husbands, yet everything is kept more or less concealed. In Yuzgat it was very different, and there you could actually see the dance of the Turkish gipsy women, although in Angora it was strictly prohibited.

M. Gasparini was doing a large practice. He had been established for ten years in Angora and its neighbourhood. From his position as a medical man he had the opportunity of knowing more

about the domestic life of the inhabitants than the other European residents.

"Well, although the women may be immoral, the men are very hospitable," said the Consul. "Wherever a stranger may go he is always received with the greatest hospitality. A few years ago a friend of mine, Mr. Thompson, was travelling from the Black Sea to Angora. He arrived at a village. The Khan was full, every room was occupied. However, he was an old traveller, and could easily accommodate himself to circumstances. Taking his cloak, he lay down in the yard and prepared to pass the night in the open air. Presently he was awakened by a tap on the shoulder. On looking up, he found an old Turk bending over him.

"Why are you sleeping here?" inquired the Mohammedan.

"Because there is no room in the Khan."

"This is not right. A stranger, and outside the gate. Come with me."

Taking Mr. Thompson by the hand, the Turk led him to his house, gave him a clean bed and his breakfast, waited himself upon his guest, and would not receive any remuneration.

"Now," added the Consul, "the Turk was a Mohammedan, and Mr. Thompson a Christian; if

the Turk had been in England, and had found himself placed in a similar predicament to Mr. Thompson, do you think that there are many Englishmen who would have behaved so generously to an utter stranger?"

The following day I called upon some Armenian gentlemen, and found their houses furnished like my host's, with thick carpets, divans, and pipes, the walls being bare and whitewashed. Pictures and looking-glasses were seldom to be seen, the latter being a very costly luxury, owing to the difficulty of carriage.

The Armenians dressed in a similar manner to the Turks. The Christian women were closely veiled whenever they left the house. In many instances, an Armenian was not permitted to see his wife[1] before marriage, and had to take her, as the Yankees say, "on spec."

Great harmony existed between the Turks and Christians. Whenever I dined with an Armenian there were always Mohammedans present. When I visited a Turk's house, I generally found Armenians amongst the visitors. On inquiring whether this state of things prevailed elsewhere, I was informed by the Armenians that in other

[1] The Armenian women have more liberty in Angora than in many other towns in Asia Minor.

parts of Anatolia, and more particularly in Sivas, the Christians were ill-treated by the Turks, and that the prisons were filled with Armenians.

During my stay at Ismid I had heard precisely the same story of the sufferings of the Christians at Angora. I had been told that the Armenians were cruelly oppressed, and that justice was never shown to them. However, in Angora the two religions did not seem to clash. The Mohammedans and Christians were on the best of terms. I began to be a little sceptical as to the truth of the statement about Sivas, and determined not to form any opinion on the matter from mere hearsay evidence, but to see with my own eyes if the prisons were so full of Christians as the Armenians in Angora would have had me believe.

Later on in the day, Radford suggested that it would be as well for me to sell the lame horse and buy another; he was doubtful whether, even without his pack, the animal would be able to march to Yuzgat. The poor beast was very lame, the frog of his foot was much swollen. Whilst we were talking, a Turkish veterinary surgeon arrived: taking out his knife, he made a slight incision in the swollen place.

Meantime several horse-dealers, learning that I wanted to buy a horse, brought me some animals

for inspection, at the same time offering me the liberal price of 2*l.* sterling for my own animal.

"Well," said one man, extracting some silver from what appeared to be an old stocking, "I will give twelve medjidis."

"Your heart is very hard, brother, soften it a little," said Osman. "Our horse shall not go for less than forty silver pieces. You love your money, but we love our horse still more."

Nobody would give this sum, and as I thought that possibly the operation performed by the Turkish veterinary surgeon might benefit the animal, I determined to wait another day in Angora. This would also give me an opportunity of inspecting more closely the old Augustin monument, one of the curiosities in the town.

To my great delight the operation proved successful; in the evening the horse could walk without much pain. He would be able to march on the following morning, and so I gave orders for an early start. Just before leaving, a servant arrived from the Pacha's palace. The young Bey, who had observed that I much admired a work entitled the "History of the Ottoman Empire," and which was in his library, had sent it to me as a present, and hoped that I would do him the honour of

accepting the book as a memento of my visit to Angora. There were about ten volumes, the weight would have been at least twenty pounds, and a considerable addition to the baggage. Much to my regret, I was obliged to decline the kind offer. The hospitality of the Turkish nation is proverbial. The generosity of the Turks is equally great. In fact, they carry this virtue to excess. Sometimes after having admired a horse, I have been surprised to find that the steed has been sent to my stable, with a note from the owner, entreating my acceptance of the animal.

I often experienced great difficulty in finding excuses for not accepting the presents so generously offered to me by my entertainers. "I cannot take any more luggage," I would say, if the present were at all cumbersome. However, if it were a horse, I could only decline the gift and say that I had not sufficient servants to look after the animals.

"But I have plenty of servants, take one of mine; he will accompany you throughout your journey, and then will return to me," would be the answer.

People in this country who abuse the Turkish nation, and accuse them of every vice under the sun, would do well to leave off writing pamphlets

and travel a little in Anatolia. There is an old saying that "the devil is not so black as he is painted," and in many things writers who call themselves Christians might well take a lesson from the Turks in Asia Minor.

CHAPTER XIV.

We leave Angora—The Effendi wants a turkey—A very old cock—The cooking-pot—An Armenian woman on horseback—Baggage upset in the river—Cartridges in the water—Osman castigating the delinquent—Delayed on the road—Asra Yuzgat—How the inhabitants build their houses—The Caimacan—His house—His servants undress him—He goes to bed—All the cartridges spoiled.

My host was up at daybreak to see me off.

"Come and see me in England," I said.

"If Allah pleases, I will," was my friend's reply, and I only hope that I may have the opportunity of returning Suleiman Effendi's hospitality.

The road was hard and good for a few miles, we rode for some time by the Ayash river.

After marching for about five hours, we came to a small farm-house. It was on the opposite bank of the river to ourselves; but there was a ford, and as there was no wood on our side of the stream, I determined to cross and halt an hour for lunch. The house belonged to an Armenian. It was

filthily dirty. Vermin could be seen crawling in all directions on the rugs. In consequence of this, I resolved to make our fire outside, and lunch in the open air. There were some turkeys in the farm-yard, and the proprietor coming up, I desired Osman to purchase one of the birds.

"The Effendi wants a turkey," said Osman to the farmer.

This announcement at once created a great commotion among the female portion of the Armenian household—the turkeys being looked upon by the women in the establishment as their own particular property.

"What for?" said an elderly dame, whose face was bound up in what appeared to be a dish-cloth.

"To eat."

"Have you any money?" asked the woman suspiciously.

"Money?" said Osman indignantly; "much money. We can afford to eat turkey every day! Now, then, how much for this one?" pointing to an old bird, apparently the paterfamilias of the brood.

"Osman is an ass, sir," here interfered Radford. "That is a very old cock. Osman has his eye on him because he is the biggest, he thinks

that we can chew leather, that he do." And pursuing the brood, my English servant succeeded in catching a young pullet, which he brought triumphantly to the woman.

"How much?" I inquired.

"Twelve piastres" (about eighteenpence), replied the woman.

"Twelve piastres," said Osman; "it is a great deal of money—we could not afford to eat turkey at that rate; say ten, and have done with it."

"The bird is a hen, and will have eggs," observed the farmer.

"She may die and have no eggs, and then you would have lost ten piastres," said Osman. "Come, be quick," he added, "pick the turkey!" And giving the woman the money, the old dame retired to a little distance to prepare the bird for the pot.

When Radford had finished his cooking, and had helped me to some of the turkey, he put the remainder in my washing-basin, and handed it to Osman, for himself and the man with the pack-horses.

"Why do you not give them the cooking-pot, and let them eat out of it?" I inquired. "Perhaps they will not like eating out of my washing-basin."

"I thought of that, sir; but the pot is that hot that they would burn their fingers a-shoving them into it. Nasty, dirty fellows they are too; preferring dirty fingers to nice clean forks! But Osman, sir, he ain't that nice. He is the greediest feeder I ever see, he would eat out of a coal-scuttle sooner than not fill himself. See there, sir, he has got that turkey's leg. I knew he would have it! It was on the baggage-man's side of the basin, and Osman had eaten already one drumstick: the other ought to have gone to the chap with the horses. But Osman ain't got no conscience about eating, whatever he may have when he is flopping himself down on my coat and pretending to say his prayers."

After luncheon the two Turks were so long in loading the pack-horse that I determined to ride forward with Radford, and let the other men follow with the luggage. We had continued the journey for about an hour when, after ascending a hill, I turned round to see if there were any signs of my followers. Nothing was in sight except an Armenian woman, who was on horseback, she was riding cross-legged, and carried a baby in a handkerchief which was slung from her neck.

"Had she seen Osman?" I inquired.

"No," was the answer.

Desiring Radford to remain where he was, I galloped back in the direction of the farm-house. On arriving by the river-side a singular picture met my gaze. A pack-horse was dripping from head to foot, and was without his saddle. All the baggage was wet through. My cartridges, tea, sugar, and coffee were spoiled; Radford's bag, containing his pig tobacco, lay dripping wet by the side of the river. Osman was swearing violently at the man in charge of the pack-horses, and from time to time was administering to him a blow with a stick across the shoulders. The chastised individual was sobbing violently. On seeing me he threw himself down on the ground and began to embrace my knees.

"What has happened?" I inquired.

They both commenced speaking together.

"Stop! One at a time," I remarked.

"Yes, you dog!" said Osman to his fellow-countryman. "How dare you speak? He did not lead the horse, Effendi, he drove the animal before him, and the horse lay down in the river. Everything is spoiled! Oh! you refuse of a diseased sheep,"—this to the culprit. "And the Effendi's cartridges, he will not be able to replace them; and my brother, what will he say

about his tobacco? he will be angry—he may beat me! I knew your mother, your grandmother, and great-grandmother—they were all most improper characters—and you, you hound, you are the worst of the family!" As he said these words, Osman began to flog the delinquent most unmercifully.

I was obliged to interfere, taking my servant by the collar, I ordered him to desist, and at once to load the baggage animal.

This accident delayed us considerably on the road. Some time after sunset, on looking at my watch, I found that we had only placed an eight hours' march between ourselves and Angora. We were on a large plain, which was surrounded by hills; our path wound round the slopes of the adjacent height, presently the village of Asra Yuzgat appeared in sight. It is built on the side of a hill. We were soon riding on the tops of the houses, and had to be very careful lest our horses should suddenly come upon an open chimney. Some of the roofs had fallen in. The moon shining on the white rafters gave a ghastly appearance to the scene.

The people in this part of Anatolia have a very economical way of building their habitations. The man who is old enough to take unto himself

a helpmate, and who is about to leave his father's roof, marks a piece of ground, generally of an oblong shape and on the side of a hill. He next digs out the earth to the depth of about seven feet. Then, hewing down some trees, he cuts six posts, each about ten feet high, and drives them three feet into the ground, three posts being on one side of the oblong and three on the other. Cross-beams are fastened to the tops of these uprights, and branches of trees plastered down with clay cover all. A few planks, with a hole made in them to serve as a doorway, enclose the outer side of the building, and a broad heavy plank closes the entrance, hinges being replaced by strips of cowhide. A wooden railing divides the room into two parts; one of them is tenanted by the sheep, oxen, camels, and cows of the proprietor, the other by himself and family. No partition-wall separates the cattle from their master; and the smell which arises at night from the confined air and from the ammonia in the building is excessively disagreeable to a European. In cold weather a hole in the roof, which serves as a ventilator, is stopped by a large stone. Fuel, often made from cow's dung, first dried and then mixed with chopped straw, is thrown on the fire. The inmates, sometimes consisting of twelve or

more people, lie huddled together on the floor. This last in the poorer houses is covered by rugs made of camel's hair, and in the wealthier establishments by thick Persian carpets.

The barking of the dogs, which swarmed around us, speedily awoke the inhabitants, and a middle-aged Turk, clad in a thick brown mantle, approaching me, said that he was the Caimacan or governor, and that he hoped I would stay at his house that night.

It appeared that my friend the Bey at Angora had written to him about my journey, and had said that I should reach Asra Yuzgat at sunset. The Caimacan knew nothing of our accident on the road: as we had not arrived by one hour after nightfall, he had gone to bed.

His house was not a large one. It consisted of two rooms, a kitchen and a reception-room. The latter apartment was used for all purposes. The owner remarked that he was going on a shooting expedition the following morning; he proposed that I should join his party. There were, according to him, a great many partridges and hares in the neighbourhood. However, my cartridges had been probably all of them spoiled in the river, so I was obliged to decline the invitation.

I was rather tired, and wished to go to bed.

On expressing a wish to this effect, a mattress was produced, and put down in one corner, and a second the other side of the room for the Caimacan. Three or four servants were present. No one seemed to have any intention to retire. I took off my clothes, lay down on the mattress, and drew over myself a marvellous thing in the way of *yorgans*, a silk counterpane of as many colours as Joseph's coat, and lined with feathers.

"Are you warm?" said the Caimacan.

"Yes."

"Every one is warm with that *yorgan*," he continued. "It is light, and there are no fleas in it. You will sleep well."

He now prepared to go to bed. The four servants assisted him. First they drew off his boots, and then his nether garments; the Caimacan glancing from time to time at me out of the corner of his eye, probably wishing to see what impression the fact of his having four servants to put him to bed had produced on my mind. He had been astonished when I undressed myself, and had remarked,—

"Why, you have two servants, and you take off your own clothes! What is the good of having servants if you do not make them useful?"

By this time he was in bed. His attendants

lay down by his side; Radford and Osman in another corner. The one tallow dip which lit the room was carefully extinguished; soon nought could be heard save the snoring of the slumberers.

I arose at daybreak, and unpacked the wet cartridges, then, taking my gun, I tried some of them; snap—snap—they would not explode. It was no use stopping for the shooting party; so desiring Osman to commence loading the horses, I took leave of my host.

CHAPTER XV.

The Kizil Ermak—No bridge in the neighbourhood—How to cross the river—The current—Can my brother swim?—How to embark the horses—Osman's expostulation—Bandaging the horse's eyes—Yakshagan—Fresh post-horses—An uncivil official—Madeh—Silver-mines—Water in the pits—Proper machinery wanted—Engineers required—Kowakoli—Vines—How to preserve grapes—Sugar very dear—A farmer—The Angora famine—The late Sultan—Russian assessors—We do not wish to be tortured to change our religion—Allah is always on the side of justice—Sekili—The pace of a *Rahvan*—Marble hovels—Hospitality—Foreign settlers—A Kurdish encampment—The tax-collectors—The wealth of the Kurdish Sheiks—The Delidsche Ermak—Fording the river—A district abounding in salt—Turkoman girls—The many languages spoken in Anatolia—A lunch under difficulties.

We rode across a low ridge of mountains, rocks which looked like iron ore lying about in all directions, and presently arrived at the Kizil Ermak, a broad and rapid stream which runs

into the Black Sea, about fifty miles S.E. of Sinope. The distance across the river was at least one hundred yards, the left bank being very precipitous. The depth of the water, owing to the recent rains, was not less than seven feet. There is no bridge in the neighbourhood, the nearest being twenty-four miles higher up the river; I was curious to learn how we should reach the other shore. The guide soon solved the problem. Riding about half a mile along the bank, he put two fingers in his mouth and whistled. In a few minutes the sound was answered from the opposite side of the river. Six men appeared in sight. Descending the bank, they dragged a triangular-shaped barge from some rushes, and, getting into it, began to pull with all their might in our direction. The current was very swift, the starting-point was nearly half a mile beyond us; but notwithstanding this, the oarsmen overshot their mark. We had to lead our horses some little distance before we reached the boat.

It was a queer sort of a craft, certainly not more than twenty-five feet long, and about sixteen in its widest part. Its sides were two feet above the water: the men could not approach the bank nearer than twenty yards. The bottom was

muddy. Our horses would have to walk through the mud to the boat, and then jump over the bulwarks.

There were altogether eight horses, my own four, three belonging to the post, and the animal the guide rode, a brute which kicked, and already had slightly lamed my grey.

"I shall be drowned," said Osman plaintively, "I know I shall! Can my brother swim?" pointing to Radford.

"What does he say, sir?" inquired my English servant.

"He wants to know if you can save him if he falls into the water."

"Save him? no, sir. I cannot swim a stroke. I wonder what our engineers at Aldershot would say if they had to get us over in such a craft as this? It is wuss than a pontoon!"

The boatmen wanted to take four horses across at a time; a veto was put upon this proposal on account of the guide's horse; it was determined that he should go alone. Taking the saddle off my own animal, I led him into the water; on reaching the boat I climbed into it, and tried to make the horse follow. This was by no means an easy task, he had sunk at least a foot into the mud, and evidently did not fancy the leap into the bark.

Three of the boatmen now got into the river. One of them, seizing my horse's tail, twisted it violently, the others poked him from behind with their oars. Osman all this time was expostulating with the animal from the bank.

"Dear horse, jump in! You shall have as much barley as you can eat this evening."

This argument not having any effect upon the horse, Osman's language waxed stronger, and he heaped numerous curses upon the animal's ancestry.

"Drat you!" said Radford at last; "you are always a-talking when there is something to do. Go and help, can't you?" Suiting the action to the word, he gave a push to the noisy Turk, which nearly upset him into the water.

At length, and by the exertions of all our party, my horse was persuaded to make an effort. Rearing himself up, he placed his two fore-feet in the boat. A chorus of oaths and ejaculations —the hind-legs followed. Once safely in, I bandaged his eyes. The other horses, seeing that one of their number was embarked, followed without much difficulty.

We floated down the stream for some distance, and at a great speed, before the boatmen could get any command over their craft, which whirled

round as if in a whirlpool. Fortunately the horses were all blindfolded, and could not see the water. At last we reached the opposite bank, having descended the stream for more than a mile from our starting-point. So much time was lost in getting the other horses over, that night was upon us before we reached our destination, Yakshagan, a large village with two hundred houses. It was only fourteen miles from Asra Yuzgat, though, owing to the river, we had employed from sunrise to sunset in the journey.

At Yakshagan it was necessary to hire fresh post-horses. The official at the station was very uncivil, and declared that he would not supply me with any unless I paid for three horses from Angora. I had only engaged two, however, the man with them had chosen to bring a third animal, instead of riding on one of the baggage horses. At last the difficulty was settled by the guide, who was known to the postmaster, saying that he would be responsible for the amount; whilst I agreed to refer the matter to the authorities at Yuzgat, and abide by their decision.

I started rather late, in consequence of the altercation. After a five hours' ride along a good road and through a beautiful country, we arrived at Madeh. Here there are several silver-mines

which, till very lately, have been worked by the Turks. I was informed that water has recently found its way into the pits. In consequence of this the miners had abandoned them.

"It is a great pity," said an old Turk, an inhabitant of the village. "With proper machinery it would be easy to pump out the water, and these mines abound in silver."

"We have got nothing but paper money in Anatolia," he added sorrowfully, "all this rich metal lies buried beneath our feet."

It surprises a traveller to find that the Turks make so little use of their mines. In the course of my ride from Angora I had passed through a country apparently abounding in iron, and with many traces of coal. At Madeh there is silver, whilst copper is also found in the immediate neighbourhood. With intelligent engineers to explore the mineral wealth of Anatolia, Turkey would be able not only to pay the interest of her debt, but would speedily become one of the richest countries in the world.

From Madeh we continued the march to Kowakoli. The country on each side of the road is covered with vines. The grapes in this part of Turkey are very large. The inhabitants preserve the fruit throughout the winter by hang-

ing it up in cellars. The atmosphere is dry; unless the temperature falls much below zero, and the grapes freeze, they can be kept till the early spring. There is no wine made in the neighbourhood. The Armenians, who in other parts of Anatolia make large sums of money by distilling spirits, here neglect this branch of industry. The grapes are either eaten, or the unfermented juice is kept to sweeten pastry, for sugar is very dear, and costs more than a shilling the pound. This price is beyond the means of not only the poorer, but even of the wealthier inhabitants of the district. In consequence of this they drink their coffee without sweetening it, and look upon a present of a few pounds of sugar as a donation worthy of a sultan's generosity.

I was hospitably entertained by an old farmer. He bewailed the disasters caused by the Angora famine, which had been felt throughout all this district. The road from Angora had been blocked by snow for three months and a half. His cattle all died from starvation, his goats had also perished. The late Sultan, Abdul Aziz, had sent large sums of money and food to the suffering people; but the roads were impassable, and the provisions could not reach their destination. Many poor people had died of hunger with cart-

loads of corn and barley only a few miles from their doors.

My host had one son, a lad about sixteen years of age. The boy regretted that he was not old enough to join the sultan's forces.

"Your time will come soon enough," observed his parent.

"He does not know what war is like," added the farmer sorrowfully. "A great many men have gone to Servia from this neighbourhood, and several have been killed. God grant, if my boy should have to go, that he may return to his old father."

"Is there much enthusiasm here for the war?" I inquired.

"Immense," replied the farmer; "the people feel that it is a question not only of religion but also of property. We landlords should not like to have Russian assessors grinding us down to the last piastre. We do not wish to be tortured to change our religion, and we do not want to be made soldiers against our will."

"But you are all soldiers now," I remarked.

"Yes, because it is the time of war, and it is a struggle for our very existence. When the fighting is over, our young men will return to their homesteads, and gladden their families once more."

"Do you think that you shall be able to withstand your foe?"

"Allah is always on the side of justice, and He will give us the victory," rejoined the old man proudly. "Our land shall drink our blood ere we give up one foot of soil to the invader."

We now rode towards Sekili, a village about twenty-seven miles from our sleeping quarters.

Presently my grey horse began to walk lame. He had been kicked by the guide's animal on the previous day. My weight was too much for the poor little brute. I resolved to change horses with Osman, who was much lighter than myself. Calling the Turk to my side, I desired him to dismount, and then mounted the ambling steed. The pace of a Rahvan, or ambling horse, is an easy one for the rider; and the animal can get over the ground at the rate of about five miles an hour; the ordinary walk of the small Turkish horses being not much above three.

We passed by some hovels. Their walls were built of marble; the roofs were made of beams covered with mud; the pure white rock presenting a striking contrast to its filthy surroundings. Marble abounds in this neighbourhood. Large blocks were lying on all sides of us, and along our path. Some ruins in the vicinity

showed that hundreds of years ago the inhabitants of this part of Anatolia were able to utilize their quarries.

Poor Turkey, she has descended the steps of civilization, and not ascended them like European nations.

However, though mud hovels have replaced the marble palaces of the Turk's ancestors, the Turks themselves remain unchanged. Hospitality—their great virtue—is as rife in 1877 as in the days of Mohammed II. No matter where an Englishman may ask for shelter, he will never find a Mohammedan who will deny him admittance.

We left behind us some mountains of slate, and rode over rich soil, which had been left fallow for miles around.

"There are not inhabitants enough to cultivate the land," was the guide's answer to a question from me about the subject.

He was doubtless right. Asia Minor, like Spain, needs a threefold population to develope her natural wealth. Let foreign settlers go to Anatolia. Let them make railways throughout the country, it could supply the whole of Great Britain with corn, and the mines of coal and of other minerals would prove a source of immense wealth to the inhabitants.

Later in the day we passed a Kurdish encampment. The Kurds all lived in circular black tents, and some women, with unveiled faces, rushed outside the dwellings to see the strangers pass.

The Turkish authorities have great difficulty in collecting the taxes from this nomad race. Whenever the Kurds expect a visit from the tax-collector, they pack up their chattels and migrate to the mountains. Here they can place the Turkish officer at defiance, and only return to the plains when their spies have announced the enemy's departure. A few years ago the wealth of the Kurdish sheiks was very considerable; many of them owned twenty, and even thirty thousand sheep, besides large droves of horses, and numerous herds of cattle. The famine, however, which devastated the province, was as disastrous for the Kurds as for the Turks. It has left them in a wretched state of poverty.

The Delidsche Ermak, a tributary of the Kizil Ermak, crossed our path. There was no bridge, and we had some difficulty in finding a ford. At last the marks of some horses' hoofs showed our guide the exact spot: riding into the stream—here about fifty yards wide—and with the water up to his horse's girths, he piloted us

over in safety. The bottom of the river is firm. I was informed that the stream becomes very shallow during the summer months; the inhabitants can then cross it with their ox-carts.

The village of Sekili is made up of twenty mud hovels. Our accommodation for the night was not of a luxurious kind. But after a long and tiring march a man speedily reconciles himself to circumstances. A fire was lit. Two old hens were stewing in the pot. A kettle full of tea simmered on the fire; and with a pipe after dinner, things looked a little brighter than at first. We next traversed a district abounding with salt. The soil sparkled in the sun. The crystal substance was visible for a considerable distance. Presently some Turkoman girls, with high, picturesque head-dresses, rode by us at a gallop: their merry laughter rang in the air as they passed. Soon afterward we came to their village, the habitations being nothing more or less than a few holes in the side of a hill. The Turkomans pronounce Turkish rather differently to the Turks. At first I had some little difficulty in making myself understood. Indeed, a man must be a polyglot to know all the languages spoken in Anatolia. Armenian, Greek, Circassian, Kurdish, Tartar, Persian, Georgian, and Arabic,

besides Turkish, are heard within a radius of one hundred miles. The different sounds in these languages are very puzzling to a stranger who is trying to perfect himself in Turkish.

Some Turkomans, dressed in white tunics, broad red trousers, and with grey sashes round their waists, were sitting idly at the entrance to their burrows. A woman, in a crimson dressing-gown, and a few girls, with naught on save long white shifts, and caps, were busily engaged in drawing water from a neighbouring well. Some goats, which had descended the hill, were feeding on the roofs of the houses.

We entered one of the dwellings, but so many fleas were hopping about that I determined to eat my lunch in the open air. The proprietor of the hovel was very much surprised at our preferring the cold outside to the shelter of his domicile.

"My Effendi does not like fleas," said Osman.

"There are not many here!" said the proprietor. "It does not do to be particular. In Sekili," he continued, "fleas abound, the Effendi ought to be accustomed to them by this time."

"What does he say, sir?" asked Radford, as Osman gradually explained the Turkoman's remarks to me.

"Say! He says that you ought to be accustomed to fleas by this time."

"Accustomed, sir? No, but they are getting accustomed to me. Haldershot is a joke to this here Turkey so far as fleas are concerned."

Presently my servant continued,—

"These Turks, sir, ain't got no decent tobacco, why a pipeful of cavendish, or good bird's hi, is worth all the hay they smoke. No wonder people in England abuse the Turks—and quite right too. Men who might grow shag tobacco, and prefer growing hay tobacco, can't be of much account."

CHAPTER XVI.

A victim to the famine—Daili—A conversation with some Turkomans—The massacre of the Teke Turkomans by the Russians—Women violated—Little boys and girls abused and murdered—The Muscovite is a beast—Should not you like to cut the throats of all the Russians?—What is the best way to get rid of a wasp's nest?—A war of extermination—Yuzgat—A cavalcade of horsemen—Mr. Vankovitch—The telegram—Our reception—Old friends of the Crimea—Some visitors—Things have altered for the better—The Christians at Yuzgat—Armenians and Turks dine together—Mr. Vankovitch's experiences—The Polish insurrection—General Muravieff—Brutality to the women at Vilna.

On the track once more; and now we came to a large stone, in the middle of the path. This marked the resting-place of a victim to the recent famine. The poor fellow had fallen down from exhaustion, and had died on this spot. It was too much trouble for the survivors to move his corpse, they had made a hole and buried him where he lay.

My grey horse, which Osman was riding, still went very lame; so I limited our march to six hours, and stopped at the little village of Daili. Here there were only fifteen houses. Many camels and herds of cattle were grazing in the neighbourhood, and the ground appeared to have been cultivated for a considerable distance. On this occasion the fortune of travellers gave us better quarters. The house in which we were lodged was clean. A raised dais of wood was set apart for the servants. Mattresses with cushions were reserved for the proprietor and his guests.

There were some Turkomans in the village, and when the news was spread that an Englishman had arrived, several of them came to see me.

"We are so glad to see an Englishman," said an old man, the spokesman for their party.

Osman now interrupted him.

"Effendi, they want to tell you that they hate the Muscovites, and that they hope England will not allow the Tzar's soldiers to massacre them like they (the Russians) massacred the Teke Turkomans."

"Were many women and children belonging to the Teke Turkomans killed by the Russians."

The old man shook his head.

"Many! many!" he replied. "The women were violated by the soldiers. The little boys and girls were abused and then murdered. The men took pleasure in these awful crimes. The Muscovite is a beast! He is worse than a hyena; the hyena sucks the blood of his victim, but the Russian satisfies his lust first, and then tears to pieces the object of his pleasure."

"We hear," he continued, "you have as Padishah, a lady. What does she think of this way of treating the Turkoman's little ones?"[1]

"And what do you think yourself?" he added. "Should not you like to cut the throats of all the Russians?"

This was rather a strong way of dealing with the question. However, if I had been a Turkoman, and my own sisters had been treated by the Russians in the way the Turkoman women have been, I should have looked upon the matter from a Turkoman point of view.

"They are not all equally guilty," I replied.

"Equally guilty! Yes they are. From the Tzar upon his throne to the soldiers who do his bidding they are a nation of assassins! What is

[1] For treatment of the Turkomans by the Russian soldiers, I refer the reader to Mr. Schuyler's highly interesting work, "Turkistan."

the best way to get rid of a wasp's nest?" he now inquired.

"Smoke it, and destroy the young ones," I replied.

"Well, that," said the Turkoman, "is what we must do with the Russians. We must kill them all. And Allah will be with us; for He knows who began the butchery."

"Have many men gone from this village to the army?" I asked.

"Every able-bodied man is serving, and we are now, all of us, going to the front; greybeards as well as boys. We feel that it is a war of extermination. If we do not defend our homesteads, woe betide us!"

On leaving Daili the track was firm and good for the first three hours; it then became very precipitous, and led down steep declivities, and over a succession of boulders. At last we came to a large circular plain; it was surrounded by hills; on one side of this vast natural basin, and on a slope, lay Yuzgat.

As we were nearing the walls a cavalcade of horsemen appeared in sight. One of them advancing saluted us by touching his fez, and then addressed me in excellent French. He was a Pole, Vankovitch by name, and was employed as chief engineer in the district. He had received

a telegram from the Italian doctor, M. Gasparini, of Angora, to say that I was on the road, and had ridden out with some Armenian gentlemen to welcome us to the town.

An Armenian now asked me to take up my quarters in his house. I had been lodged beneath a Turkish roof at Angora, and was curious to see the difference between the Christian and Mussulman mode of living. I gladly accepted the offer.

Many more horsemen, Turks and Armenians, joined us ere we entered the city. I now learnt that my kind friend, the Bey at Angora, had telegraphed to some of his acquaintances, asking them to do what they could to make my stay at Yuzgat pleasant.

The news of the approach of an Englishman had already been spread through the town. The inhabitants had all turned out to have a look at the stranger.

"An Englishman in Yuzgat is indeed a surprise for the inhabitants," said a young Turk who was riding by my side. "I do not believe that one of your nation has been here for the last twenty years. We Turks are not ungrateful," he continued, with a smile. "We have not forgotten our old friends of the Crimea, and what you did for us then."

"Please God you will do as much now!" said another horseman. "Anyhow your arrival has created an immense excitement; there was not so great a crowd to see the Pasha of Angora, when he paid us a visit."

"Sir," observed Radford, who, surprised at the tremendous ovation I was receiving from the crowd, had gradually sidled up to my horse, "this reminds me of our riding after Don Carlos in Spain. Only in Spain, all the people came to look at Don Carlos, and here they have come to look at us. Just, sir, for all the world as if we were a Lord Mayor with his men in harmour riding in state by the Horse Guards. There have been a lot of dirty Turks kissing Osman already, so pleased they seem to see him; and two or three men were slobbering over my boots as we rode up the hill!"

We entered a courtyard: dismounting, I ascended some steps which led to my host's house. The room placed at my disposal was furnished in a similar fashion to the one which I had inhabited in Angora. Several servants hastened to pull off my riding-boots, and the proprietor said that some Armenians were waiting outside, they wished to speak to me. "Would I see them?"

"By all means," I replied; "show them in."

Several men entered; they were dressed in various costumes, the dressing-gown pattern being evidently a favourite amidst the inhabitants of Yuzgat. The visitors ranged themselves against the wall in order, according to their social positions, and then salaamed me. On my returning the salute, the gentlemen squatted down upon the floor, and the salaaming ceremony was repeated.

"They have come to ask whether you will honour them by inspecting the Armenian school," said my host, who, of higher rank than the visitors, had not squatted down on the floor, but was seated with his legs tucked under him on the divan.

"We are all Christians," said an old, and very dirty Armenian, who looked as if water and he had long been strangers to each other.

"It is a pleasure to see a Christian," he added. "It does me good."

"We are all delighted!" said the rest of the company. Whereupon we salaamed again.

"How do you like the Turks?" I now inquired.

"They get on very well together," observed the Pole, who had accompanied me home, "and the law is carried out very fairly for all classes. I will give

you an instance. The chief of the telegraphs in Yuzgat is an Armenian. One day he saw a few Turkish boys teazing some Armenian children, and calling them giaours. He beat the Turkish children. Some Turks, coming up, took the part of the Mohammedan lads, and struck the telegraph-man. The latter complained to the authorities; the Turks who had beaten him were at once imprisoned."

"Twenty years ago this would not have happened," said another of the visitors; "but here things have altered for the better."

"However, at Sivas," he continued, "you will find that the Christians are horribly ill-treated by their Pacha. The prison is full of Christians. There is no sort of justice in that city. The Pacha takes away Christian little boys and girls from their parents, and shuts them up in his seraglio."

"Is this true?" I inquired of Mr. Vankovitch.

"They say so. But you must remember that you are in the East," was the Pole's reply.

"Personally," he added, "I make a rule to believe nothing except what I see myself. You are going to Sivas?"

"Yes."

"Well, you will be able to judge for yourself.

At all events, the Christians in this town are not oppressed in any way. You see Armenians and Turks dining together at the same table, and so far as justice is concerned, the Christians obtain quite as much of it as the Mohammedans."

The Armenians, who by this time had finished their coffee, now left the room; and Mr. Vankovitch remaining behind, began to tell me of his experiences in Asia Minor, and of the cause which had induced him to leave his own country.

He had been educated in the Military College at St. Petersburg, and had passed his examination for the engineers just before the Polish insurrection. He had joined the rebels, and taking command of a large band which had assembled near Vilna, had fought against the Russians for more than two years. General Muravieff, known to history by his brutality to the women of Vilna, published four proclamations offering rewards for Vankovitch's head. Fortune favoured the young Pole, who was able to escape his foes. When the rebellion was suppressed, he succeeded in reaching Odessa, and made his way on board a Greek ship bound for Constantinople. After being two days at sea, the vessel, owing to bad weather, was obliged to put back into harbour. The captain

then said, that as some Russian officers would be certain to come on board, it would be better for Vankovitch to remain concealed in a friend's house, until the ship could sail. He took the advice; but left all his clothes and other effects in the cabin.

The vessel started that night; he did not receive any warning, and the captain, carrying off his luggage, robbed him of everything he had in the world. The Polish committee in Odessa raised a little money for their brother in misfortune: after paying for his passage in another steamer, he arrived at Constantinople with barely five pounds in his pocket. This was soon spent, and then in order to earn his bread, he obtained employment as a road-maker. The engineer who superintended the work discovered that the navvy knew as much about road-making as he did himself. He promoted him to be assistant-engineer.

Vankovitch complained that he was unable to write to his father, a gentleman who resided near Vilna. The engineer had sent two or three letters; but on each occasion the envelopes were opened by the Russian police, and the parent had been heavily fined, simply because Vankovitch had dared to write to him.

CHAPTER XVII.

M. Perrot—Armenian customs—Man and wife—We keep our wives for ourselves—My host's niece—Law about divorce—Shutting up the wives—Turkish husbands—How to get a divorce—Marrying a divorced woman—Population of Yuzgat—Crime—Mines in the neighbourhood—Tax paid in lieu of military service—The Circassians—Their promise to the Turkish Government—Tax on land; on house-property; on corn; cattle—Collectors of taxes—Jealousy about religious matters—Dissensions amongst Christians—American Missionaries—A loyal address—The market—A bazaar two stories high—A walk through the town—Gipsy women—An elderly dame—Obstreperous young ladies—The old woman dances.

My host now returned, and informed me that M. Perrot, a French author who wrote a book about Asia Minor, had resided beneath this roof. On turning over the leaves of the work, which had found its way to Yuzgat, I came to a page in which M. Perrot observes that "one day I inquired of my host why

he did not introduce me to the lady of the house?"

"It is our custom," was the reply. "And I find it a wise one. What good does it do me if other men see my wife? I took her for myself; she is my property. I have heard that you Europeans spoil your wives; mine is educated properly. When I enter my harem, she comes to kiss my hand, then she stands upright before me in a respectful attitude, and she only opens her mouth when I address her."

On showing my host the paragraph, he observed, "When M. Perrot was here, my father owned this house. I remember the circumstance well. I was in the room when M. Perrot asked my father to introduce him to my mother. I suppose my parent was under the impression that in Europe you keep your wives for your guests; but anyhow we keep our wives for ourselves."

"What!" I inquired, "would you not introduce me to your sisters or mother?"

"No, certainly not."

Mr. Vankovitch here interposed with the remark that on the following day my host's niece was to be affianced to her future husband; that the bridegroom had not set eyes upon the face

of his intended, and no one in Yuzgat, save her own immediate relatives, had ever seen the young lady.

"Well," I inquired, "and if the wife of an Armenian is unfaithful to him, can he obtain a divorce?"

"No," replied my host; "our religion does not allow of such a step; he does not even see his wife's face before marriage."

"Then he has no opportunity of studying her character, and she has no opportunity of studying his."

"No."

"They are a set of fools," said Vankovitch to me in Russian, this language not being understood by the proprietor. "They think that by shutting up their wives, they can keep them out of mischief, but the husbands are very much mistaken."

"We need not be surprised at it," he continued; "an Armenian lady is in no way educated. She is confined in a harem. She is the slave of her husband, and has to do all sorts of menial work for him—wash his feet, rub them dry, and wait at table. From her earliest childhood a girl is brought up to consider herself as a slave in her father's house; until the

Armenians abandon these barbarous customs, their so-called Christianity will not do them much good. A Turkish husband has no difficulty in obtaining a divorce—in fact he is not even put to the expense of going to a court of law. All he has to do is to say, in the presence of a witness, 'I renounce you,' and he is at once freed from his wife, who is at liberty to go where she likes, and marry whomsoever she pleases."

"If a Turk," added Mr. Vankovitch, "once renounces his wife before a witness, he cannot withdraw his renunciation. There is a story that a woman, who wished to be divorced from her husband, dressed up one of her female slaves in man's clothes and provided her with false whiskers and beard. On entering the harem late at night the husband found this disguised figure lying by the side of his wife. He was furious, and at once renounced the, as he thought, faithless lady. There is a curious law about marrying a divorced woman which is not generally known by Europeans," continued the speaker. "If a Turk has divorced his wife, but she wishes to return to him and he to take her, the lady first of all must be married to some other man, and the rites in their entirety be accomplished; the new spouse

then divorces her. After this process she can return to her former husband.

"A husband who wishes to take to himself again his divorced wife, generally chooses some beggar, almost always a very old man; he then offers this elderly individual a sum of money to marry the lady and afterwards renounce her. Sometimes, however, there are difficulties in carrying out these arrangements. The lady takes a fancy to the beggar, and the beggar to the lady. The pauper will not divorce her, and the original husband is laughed at by the rest of the community."

There were 10,000 inhabitants in Yuzgat, but there was very little crime. Only one execution had taken place during the last fifteen years, and this had been for murder.

The town itself is, comparatively speaking, of recent date, its construction dating back 130 years. The neighbourhood abounds with mines, and I was assured that iron, silver, and coal had been found near the city.

The Armenians did not serve in the army as soldiers; but in lieu of military service, paid the Ottoman Government twenty-eight piastres thirty-two paras every year for each male child, from his birth to his death.

The Circassians, of whom there are a great many in this part of Turkey, are not compelled to join the army; but they have promised the Government that every able-bodied man amongst them shall turn out as an irregular horse or foot soldier, should his services be required.

The people in the province of Angora are taxed as follows:—If ground is cultivated, the proprietor gives the Sultan the tithe of the crop.

The owner of a house pays 4*l.* per 1000*l.* of the estimated value of his abode, that is to say, if he is living in it himself. If on the contrary he lets it, he must pay 40*l.* per 1000*l.* The tax for people engaged in trade or commerce, is 30 per cent. on their profits. If a merchant sells corn in a town, he has to pay a duty of two paras for every twenty okas of grain purchased from him, and should he dispose of a horse, sheep, or ox, in the market-place, he must give the Government 2½ per cent. of the proceeds of the sale. A farmer has to pay the Government four piastres a year if he is the owner of a goat, and three for each sheep he possesses. The collectors of taxes in almost every instance were Mohammedans; many of the Christians grumbled at the way they were assessed.

If an Armenian girl expresses a wish to become a Mohammedan, this gives rise to great jealousy between the Turks and Christians. At the same time the Armenians who profess the Armenian faith detest any member of their community who has accepted the Roman Catholic or Protestant doctrines. The Christians being much more intolerant towards the dissenters from their respective creeds than the Turks are to the Christians.

There has hardly ever been an instance of a Turk accepting Christianity, but the American missionaries in Asia Minor were said to have converted many Armenians to Protestantism.

The Roman Catholic missionaries have not been idle. A number of Armenians no longer reverence the Patriarch in Constantinople, but look upon the Pope as the Head of their Church.

The Turks laugh in their sleeves at the discord in the ranks of the Christian community. They cannot understand why so much hatred and ill-feeling should exist between people who worship the same Messias.

This difference of opinion amongst the Christians is by no means displeasing to the Turkish

authorities; it renders any union between the Armenians and Russia exceedingly difficult.

The following morning a servant brought a paper to my host for his signature. It was a loyal address from the principal people in Yuzgat thanking the Sultan for the Constitution. None of the Armenians believed in the reform. Most of them held the same opinion as the inhabitants of Angora, namely, that the projected Constitution was thrown out as a bait to catch some of the plenipotentiaries at the Conference, and that when the Conference was forgotten the Constitution would be numbered with the past.

Vankovitch now called. I walked with him to the market which he was constructing for the townspeople. It was not a large building, being about eighty yards long by thirty wide; the houses were each of them two stories high, built of hewn stone and with glass windows; the latter a great luxury for the natives, glass having to be brought all the way from Samsoun, a port on the Black Sea. The difficulties of transport were very great, half the glass arrived in a fractured state, this, and the extreme difficulty of carriage, added enormously to its cost price.

In the market there was literally nothing which would have attracted an observer's attention. Some of the Armenians sold dye, wood, and goat's hair; others traded in cotton stuffs and calicos, one or two American lamps to burn petroleum were in the window of a small shop which was kept by a Greek.

The engineer had experienced considerable difficulty in persuading the townspeople to let him construct a bazaar two stories high. "Our fathers have always been satisfied with one story," remarked the tradesmen, "then why should not we?"

In spite of the opposition, Vankovitch, with the Caimacan's assistance had managed to carry the day. The people who had grumbled the loudest about the new order of things, were the first to take apartments in the two-storied building.

We continued our walk through narrow lanes, and by the side of tumble-down hovels, till we arrived on the summit of a hill, the outskirts of the town. Some good-looking gipsy women with brown complexions, large dark eyes, and long black hair, were standing at the door of one of these habitations.

"These are the dancers," said Vankovitch;

"Dr. Gasparini telegraphed from Angora to ask me to arrange a gipsy dance for you. Let us go and talk to one of the old women, and choose the girls who are to perform."

An elderly dame recognized my companion; she advanced, and invited us to enter her house. When our errand was known, great excitement ensued amidst the younger damsels of the gipsy community. Each one trusted that her good looks and skill in the Terpsichorean art would influence my companion in his choice.

"Be quiet!" said the old woman indignantly to some of the more obstreperous of her young ladies, who, to show my companion their agility, were performing a sort of cancan step, very different from those dances which I had hitherto seen in the East.

"Now, then, Effendi," to my companion, "how many girls do you require?"

"Three."

"Well, three you shall have. The most beautiful and gazelle-like of our tribe. I will come myself," continued the old lady, "and I too will dance, if only to show the Frank Effendi what our dance is like."

It was as much as I could do to keep my countenance; the old woman was very fat; some of the girls, catching my eye, went off into fits of laughter.

"Ah! you may laugh, children," said the old woman indignantly, "but none of you can dance like I can. They are not supple like I am, Effendi. They cannot move their hips. They cannot sway the lower part of their bodies. Look here!"

And straightening her aged limbs, the old woman commenced wriggling her different joints, the girls applauding her, and beating time with their hands to each movement of the dancer's body.

"Very good," said Vankovitch, as she sank down on a divan, with a force which would have smashed any less strong piece of furniture. "Very good. You dance like a stag. You shall come too."

"Thank heavens," he remarked in French, "that she did not throw herself on to my lap, for this is the custom of these wild dancers; if she had done so, there would not have been much left of me. But come along, let us return; it is very stuffy here."

After making an appointment with the old lady for the dancers to come to us on the following evening, we descended the hill and walked towards the principal mosque in the town.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Mosque—The interior of the building—The lamps of different-coloured crystal—The Turks engaged in prayer—Comparison between Christians and Mussulmans—Daravish Bey—A wonderful shot—*Djerrid*—A strange request—The chase—A Bosnian lady—Her costume—A side-saddle—Even their women go out hunting—Daravish Bey dressed for the chase—A long shot—The price of a horse's forage—Most servants rob their masters—A Russian officer—The Armenian schools—The girls' school—Perhaps you would like to ask the boys some questions?—An amateur setter of questions—Mr. Marillier of Harrow school.—A sum—The schoolboys of Yuzgat—A half-holiday.

On taking off our shoes at the entrance, we were at once admitted into a large building constructed in the form of a dome. Two vast circular halls leading the one into the other, were beneath the lofty ceiling. Stained glass windows, with infinitesimally small panes, allowed but little light to penetrate to the interior, which was carpeted with rich Persian rugs of many hues and

fashions. Chains, descending from the centre of the building, supported a huge circular hoop of iron. From this were suspended a hundred lamps of different-coloured crystal. Two enormous wax candles, each as thick as a man's leg, and about seven feet high, were fixed in a corner of the building. They had been made to last a year, and had cost "tchok para"—a great many paras.

The attendant evidently thought that he should impress my mind with this announcement, and he uttered the word "tchok" in a way which no Englishman could imitate save when he is in the extreme agonies of sea-sickness. Forty or fifty Turks were lying on the floor, and seemed to be in no way disturbed by the entrance of Mr. Vankovitch and myself.

"Are there always as many people here?" I inquired.

"There are very few to-day," was the reply; "but at whatever hour you may enter, the faithful will be found praying to the All-powerful One who rules the Universe."

This, indeed, I subsequently discovered to be the case. No matter how early or late I might enter a mosque, there were always some men on their knees, praying to the Almighty; and when-

ever a service was going on, the mosques were invariably crowded.

"They pray more than Europeans do," said my companion, the engineer, as we quitted the mosque. "With us;" he added, "the women throng the churches, the men are conspicuous by their absence; in Turkey you will hardly ever meet a man who is in the habit of absenting himself from his mosque. Indeed, a Mohammedan's superstitious feelings would not allow him to do so, even if he felt inclined; he would think that the Divine vengeance would at once pursue him to his destruction."

We now called upon a Turkish gentleman, Daravish Bey. Presently he left the room, and, returning, brought an old flint-gun, marked "London, 1802." He next suggested that we should join him in a shooting excursion, and, calling a servant, desired the man to bring in a falcon. This, Daravish Bey said, would be very useful, as, if we missed the partridges, the hawk would catch them for us.

"We shall then have some game to show when we return," he continued, "and the people will not be able to laugh at our beards."

"Vankovitch is a wonderful shot," said another Turk. "He shoots partridges flying! Only

think! flying in the air! In the name of heaven, is it not wonderful? Can you hit a partridge, except when he is quite still?"

"Sometimes," I said; "but, unfortunately, most of my cartridges are wet; any how, I will try and find a few dry ones, and will go with you to-morrow."

"There is another thing which you must see before you leave Yuzgat," observed Daravish Bey, "and that is our national game, Djerrid. I have already spoken about it," he continued; "the day after to-morrow all the best riders in the neighbourhood will assemble on the plain outside the town. In the meantime, I hope that you will dine with me this evening."

"But I am staying with an Armenian gentleman, and he will expect me to dine at home."

"Bring him with you. Nay, do not disappoint me," he added. "It is many years since an Englishman has been at Yuzgat, and we do not know how to honour one sufficiently when he is here. England and Turkey are old allies, and God grant that they may remain so!"

I returned to my quarters, and found the Caimacan, who had come to pay me a visit. He was very busy, as he had to arrange for some rediff

soldiers who were to be despatched at once to Constantinople. After a few compliments and a cup of coffee, he arose and took his departure.

My host now observed,—

"Effendi, will you do me a favour?"

"What is it?" I inquired.

"Mr. Vankovitch has discharged one of his under officers, an Armenian. The man is a friend of mine—will you ask Mr. Vankovitch to pardon my friend, and reinstate him in his situation?"

"The officer is a thief," said the engineer, "for that reason I got rid of him. But this remark of our host will show you what sort of people these Armenians are. He is well aware that the fellow is a rogue. He knows that I do not wish to take him back; to try and make me do so, he asks you, who are ignorant of the circumstances, to intercede in the matter."

"You will intercede?" said the host.

"How can I? Mr. Vankovitch must know the man's character better than I do."

"But Mr. Vankovitch would do it if you asked him."

"I certainly shall not give him the opportunity of refusing," I replied. And seeing that I was obdurate, my host left off pressing me for the

moment, but only to return to the attack on the following day.

The next morning, and soon after daybreak, we assembled for the chase. The engineer had mounted me on a magnificent coal-black Arab. He himself rode a little bay, with good shoulders and fine action; whilst his wife, a Bosnian lady, who was attired in a light blue riding-habit, a hat with a peacock's feather, and who wore on her boot a long cavalry spur—was mounted on a chestnut.

Vankovitch had slung his gun across his shoulders. His double-breasted shooting-coat was dotted with cartridge-cases in the Circassian style. He was an object of great interest to a crowd of bystanders, and was evidently the chasseur par excellence of Yuzgat. Some Turkish women, wrapped up in long white sheets, stared through the corners of their veils at Mrs. Vankovitch, and were very much astonished at the proceedings, for the lady was on a side-saddle, which the engineer had lately received from Constantinople. It was only the first or second time that it had been seen in Yuzgat. The giaour woman balanced on a peg on the side of the saddle was a source of considerable wonder to the assembled crowd.

"How odd these giaours are!" said a Turk to his neighbour. "Why, even their women go out hunting! What a thing to ride on! Look, she has only one foot in the stirrup, and her other leg is across a peg in the saddle."

"How could you sit cross-legged if you had on that very thin, long dressing-gown which she is wearing?" said another bystander. "But here come Daravish Bey and his brother. They are actually going with the Frank to the chase!"

The attention of the crowd was now taken up by the new arrivals.

The two Turkish gentlemen were both dressed alike in black cloaks lined with fur, and which descended to their heels. Gold necklaces passing through diamond rings encircled each man's neck. Red waistcoats, buttoned up high in front, exposed to view an inch or two of limp, unstarched shirt-front; loose black trousers covered their legs, and a blue and white shabrach their highly-gilded saddles.

An attendant on a pony bore a falcon on his arm. Some pointers and a greyhound brought up the rear of the procession. Radford carried my double-barrelled gun, and a few cartridges, which on careful inspection seemed not to have been damaged by the wetting in the river. He

was also a source of wonder to the crowd. It was whispered about that the gun which he carried was like the Pole's fire-arm, and that it would sometimes shoot partridges on the wing.

We rode over a mountain, covered with pebbles. Presently one of the pointers began to sniff. Vankovitch thought that there was some game close at hand. He dismounted from his horse, accompanied by Daravish Bey, who was armed with the old English flint-gun. A crowd of men and urchins, who had followed us on foot from Yuzgat, watched the proceedings with the greatest interest. Suddenly a covey of partridges rose about a hundred and fifty yards from the Pole. Two reports sounded in rapid succession, the birds flew away untouched. The attendant released the falcon, and in a few seconds a partridge was in its claws.

A hare broke from behind an adjacent rock. In a moment we were in headlong pursuit, the Bosnian lady riding foremost of the flight, her horse taking the boulders and loose rocks which strewed the path in a way that showed he was well accustomed to this style of hunting.

A well-known sound made me turn my head. To my surprise I saw a young Turk galloping after me on Osman's horse—the roarer. I

had given orders that the animal was to be left in the stable, so that he might recover from the effect of our forced marches the week before.

"What are you doing with that horse?"

"Effendi, I am galloping him," was the quiet reply. "Osman lent him to me, and said that he was his property. Have I done wrong in riding him?"

"Yes," I said; "take him back at once."

"Sir," interrupted Radford, "that is just like Osman's himpudence, a-lending things which don't belong to him, and he is not that particular in returning them either. He is always asking me to lend him some tobacco, and very little I ever see of it again, except in the smoke which comes out of his mouth."

"How much are you paying for the forage of your horses?" now inquired Vankovitch, who had returned with the hare in his hand.

"About seven shillings a day."

The Pole began to laugh.

"Seven shillings! Do you know, my dear sir, that your Turkish servant is robbing you?"

"Very likely," I replied. "Most servants rob their masters. But what is the price of a horse's forage for a day?"

"About one-and-a-half piastres, or at the pre-

sent rate of exchange about twopence of your money. And chickens," continued Vankovitch, "what has he made you pay for them in the different villages on your route?"

"A shilling a piece."

"He is a thief," said the Pole, "you have been awfully cheated! why, the price in the town is only three halfpence for a fat chicken! When we return to Yuzgat, send for your man, and let me ask him a few questions. You shall not be robbed any more if I can help it. It is a bad thing for other European travellers, and it gives the inhabitants a lesson in robbery. There was a Russian officer here a few years ago. He had been paying as much as a medjîdi a day for each of his horses. However, he was a Russian, and it did not so much matter."

The following day I went to see the Armenian schools. In one of them I found 200 girls who, for Turkey, were receiving a fair education. Most of them could read and write. A class for learning embroidery was well attended, some of the elder girls' work being very neatly finished. There were two Mohammedan children in a sewing class. I was informed that many of the Mussulmans had expressed a wish to send their children to the school.

"Perhaps you would like to ask the boys some questions," said a priest who accompanied me through the building.

Now if there is one thing I dislike it is being turned into an examiner. There is always a chance of the boys knowing a great deal more than the amateur setter of questions. But, as the clergyman pressed me, I tried to remember some of the sums which I had once learned under the tuition of my highly esteemed old master Mr. Marillier of Harrow.

The herring and a half sum would have been too easy; I bethought myself of another.

"Well," said the priest, a little impatiently, "they are waiting for you."

There was a dead pause, and I gave the worthy divine the following question: "If one man can mow a field in three days, and another man in four, how long will they be doing the work, if they are both mowing it together?"

"Come," said the divine, "you have set them a very easy sum," and he duly translated it into Armenian.

"It is hardly worth doing," said one of the schoolmasters, "for of course the answer is three days and a half."

"Of course, three and a half," said the priest.

"No," I replied.

The engineer began to laugh, and we soon afterwards left the school, neither masters nor pupils being at all certain in their minds as to how they ought to set about doing the sum.

I breathed more freely on arriving in the open air, and blessed my old master, who had once set me this catch question, for my reputation as a profound mathematician is established for ever amidst this generation of school-boys in Yuzgat. After saying good-bye to the senior pedagogue who had accompanied me to the steps of the threshold, I asked him to give the lads a half-holiday. He very kindly acceded to my request; and a cheer from the boys inside, when the good news was imparted to them, made me aware that they, if not their masters, were in no way dissatisfied by my visit.

CHAPTER XIX.

A visit to some Greeks—The Turkish administration—The impalement story—The law is equally bad for Turks and Christians—Peculiarity about the Armenians and Greeks in Yuzgat—The outskirts of the town—An immense crowd—Women clad in long white sheets—Throwing the djerrid—The game—We rode better in our time—A marriage procession—Women riding donkeys—The head of the Mohammedan religion at Yuzgat—The respective merits of the Turkish and Christian faith—Allah is very kind to all true believers—What is the good of insuring? An Armenian church—A raised platform enclosed by trellis work—The occupants of the gallery—The women will stare at the men—Ladies distract the attention of the congregation—The Pole's house—A cheap servant.

I CALLED upon a Greek who had paid me a visit on the day of my arrival. Several of his compatriots were with him. They at once commenced conversing about what they suffered under the Turkish administration.

"We are very badly treated," said one.

"Very badly indeed," said another.

"Are the Christians here ever tortured?" I inquired.

"No."

"Have you ever heard of any of them being impaled?"

The company began to laugh.

"No such things go on in Turkey," said my host; "but the law is bad, that is what we mean. Just before you arrived, we were talking about a Turk who had borrowed some money from one of our countrymen and had given a gun as security for the debt. The Turk died, and the Christian, not being paid what he was owed, sold the gun to a friend. Ten years afterwards a son of the deceased Turk came and claimed the weapon, which he said was his father's property, and consequently his own. There were no papers or witnesses to prove that the gun had been pledged, and the Cadi decided for the Mohammedan."

"If a Turk had been in the Greek's place, would the same decision have been given?" I inquired.

"Yes," was the answer; "the law is equally bad for Turks and Christians."

There is one peculiarity about the Armenians and Greeks in Yuzgat which attracts the attention of the traveller, and this is that many of them

cannot write their own language, although they employ its characters. Their conversation is almost invariably in Turkish. In corresponding with a friend, both Armenians and Greeks will write in Turkish, but with the Armenian or Greek letters. The schools, which are encouraged by the Mohammedan authorities are improving the Christians in this respect. The present generation of children can most of them speak, as well as write, in the language of their ancestors.

Later on in the day I mounted my horse, and accompanied the engineer and his wife to the outskirts of the town. Here there is a vast natural basin formed by a circular chain of steep heights. Yuzgat,[1] which is built on the side of a hill, and with its houses towering above the plain looks down upon the enormous arena. An immense crowd was assembled. Horsemen were present of all nationalities, and clad in every kind of costume. Turks, Persians, Armenians, Greeks, Circassians, Tartars, Kurds, Turkomans, Georgians, were grouped together in little clusters, and talking to their fellow-countrymen. Hundreds of women, clad in long white sheets, had retired a short distance, and from a slight elevation

[1] For importance of Yuzgat from a military point of view, ee Appendix XIV. vol. ii. p. 370.

were gazing down upon the assembled multitude.

Presently the horsemen divided into two sides. Each man carried a djerrid or short stick, about four feet long, not quite so thick as a man's wrist, and weighted a little at one end. The right hand of the cavaliers grasped the middle of the djerrid. The two bands of mounted men, reining their horses back, halted facing each other, and about eighty yards apart.

Now, at a signal from the leader of one side, a horseman dashed forward at the opposing band. Brandishing his djerrid in the air, and shouting wildly to Allah, he hurled it at one of his opponents. The latter, who was on his guard, turned his horse on his haunches, and galloped away in the same direction as the missile was coming. Reaching backward, the rider caught the stick, and was greeted by the applause of the bystanders.

Meanwhile the horseman who had first attacked, hastened to regain his party. He was pursued in headlong career by one of the other side, who in his turn hurled the djerrid. The game requires considerable skill in horsemanship, and great nerve. The stick is thrown with all the rider's strength, augmented by the velocity with which his steed is galloping. If the missile be not caught or parried,

but strike a man's body, the effect is often serious; bones are fractured. Death sometimes ensues. The horses too have to be highly trained, so as to be able to halt when at full speed, and, turning, to start off in a contrary direction.

"We rode better in our time," said an old man, attired in a crimson dressing-gown, and who was eagerly watching the proceedings, to a companion by his side; "but what is that which is coming in this direction?"

In the distance a marriage procession could be seen winding amidst the hills. A bride was being carried in a cart drawn by oxen to her bridegroom's house. A band playing discordant music marched in front. Several women enveloped in sheets of white muslin rode behind the vehicle. They were mounted on donkeys, and sat astride them like men. The position is a curious one, particularly when the lady wears a short dress.

As the procession passed by the crowd, some of the donkeys began to trot. The motion became very disagreeable to the fair equestrians. The robes began to rise, and the husbands running forward, held down their wives' attire. This would have provoked the laughter of a European crowd, but in Turkey women are looked upon as beings to be shut off from the public gaze.

The Mohammedan husband as a rule does not like any one to see him walking with his own wife. The children too look upon their father as a being far superior to themselves. The Turkish parent walks first along the road, the children next some fifty yards behind their father. Last of all comes the wife, alone and neglected. She accepts this lot with resignation—her mother was a slave before her, and she will remain one till death or divorce dissolve the marriage-tie.

I now called upon the head of the Mohammedan religion at Yuzgat. He received me very courteously, and we conversed for some time upon the respective merits of the Mussulman and Christian faith. It appeared that very recently a house belonging to the Imaum (priest) had been burned to the ground.

"I hope you did not lose much property," I remarked.

"Everything I had was burned," said the old man. "But it did not signify. Allah was kind. The inhabitants raised a subscription for me. My house will soon be restored," he continued. "Allah is very good to all the true believers. If a house belonging to one of your Christian Mollahs (priests) be burned down, what does he do?" inquired the old Mohammedan.

"His house is generally insured," I replied. "He pays a little money every year to a company, and then if the edifice is destroyed by fire, it is built up again for him."

"Does he pay much money?"

"Yes, if the house is a good one, he has to pay a large sum every year."

"What is the good of paying at all?" said the Mohammedan. "Why does he not trust in Allah? That is what I have done. My new house will cost me nothing, God is great, there is but one God! And Mahomet, he is the Prophet of God," added the old man piously.

"But I thought that you believed in Kismet—destiny," I remarked.

"Destiny is great, but Allah is greater. He created destiny," was the reply.

"Do you think that Allah can change His mind?"

"He is All powerful; he can do what He likes," observed the Imaum excitedly.

Later in the day I walked into an Armenian church. This was a large building, with red carpets, and rather reminded me of a mosque. It must sometimes have been bitterly cold inside, for there were no stoves in the building. I was informed that the upper classes who came to pray,

all wore furs. As the lower orders are not able to pay for any such warm garments, they must occasionally be half-frozen when listening to their priest's oration.

A raised platform at one end of the church was enclosed by trellis-work. It was so constructed that the occupants of the gallery could see the clergyman, without their attention being occupied by the congregation.

"This gallery is for our women," said an Armenian, who showed me over the building; "and the trellis-work is to prevent them from staring at the men."

"Or rather to prevent the men from staring at them!"

My companion laughed at the remark.

"It answers both purposes!" he exclaimed. "But if you look at the screen, you will see that it is broken in several places, three or four of the holes in the trellis-partition have been made into one. The women have done this to obtain a better view."

"Do you not separate the women from the men in your churches?" he inquired.

"No."

"Then if the ladies are as pretty as they are said to be, your clergyman must find it rather difficult to keep the attention of his flock."

It was getting dusk. I went straight from the

church to the Pole's house. There was hardly any furniture in it. This he explained by saying that he was only temporarily employed at Yuzgat; so soon as he had finished building the new bazaar he would have to return to Angora. A few divans, as in the Turkish houses, surrounded the walls. The two-barrelled gun, which sometimes "shot partridges flying," the wonder of the other sportsmen in Yuzgat, was lying in a corner.

After dinner, which was washed down by some very fair red wine, manufactured by the Christians in the town, a little boy, about twelve years of age, entered the room; coming up to my host, he whispered something in his ear.

"The gipsies have arrived," said Vankovitch, turning to the lad, he desired him to lay down some carpets at the other end of the apartment.

"That boy does not cost me much," said my host, pointing to his servant. "I found him starving in the streets a few years ago, during the famine. His mother had turned him out of doors, The child had nothing to eat. I took pity on the poor little fellow, and he has been with me ever since; he does more work than all the rest of the servants together. Whilst, if I wish to punish him, all I have to do is to point to the door."

CHAPTER XX.

The gipsies—A fearful instrument—The musicians—The dancers—The chief of the gipsy women—Her attire—Vankovitch's wife—A glass of raki—The fat woman—The man with the bagpipes—The dance—The two girls—The old lady accompanies them—The castanets—What is the good of dancing?—The Lord Chamberlain, who is he?—The marriage festivals in a harem—The old woman dances a *pas seul*—Osman's interview with Vankovitch—Oh, Osman! thou descendant of a line of thieves!—What is the meaning of this?—The Effendi's horses—The people at the Khans—An undulating country—Mostaphas—Unwillingness to fight their country's battles—Several inhabitants killed in Servia—Industrious insects—A country like the Saxon Switzerland—A district abounding with pine forests—The telegraph wire to Sivas—Sawmills—Gogderi Soo—A house with two rooms—The stable—The fire—The harem—My host and his wives—Two shots in the air—The ladies—Their legs—The discomfort of the proprietor.

Some gipsy men now entered, and, squatting down on the carpet, began to tune their lutes. One of their party carried a fearful instrument. It was rather like the bagpipes. He at once com-

menced a wild and discordant blast. The musicians were followed by the dancers.

The chief of the gipsy women was provided with a tambourine. She was attired in a blue jacket, underneath this was a purple waistcoat, slashed with gold embroidery, a pair of very loose, yellow trousers covered her extremities. Massive gold earrings had stretched the lobes of her ears, they reached nearly to the shoulders, and by way of making herself thoroughly beautiful, and doing fit honour to the occasion, she had stained her teeth and finger-nails with some red dye. Her eyebrows had been made to meet by a line drawn with a piece of charcoal. Gold spangles were fastened to her black locks. Massive brass rings encircled her ankles, the metal jingling as she walked, or rather waddled round the room.

The two girls who accompanied her were in similar costumes, but without the gold spangles for their hair, which hung in long tresses below their waists. The girls, advancing, took the hand of Vankovitch's wife, and placed it on their heads as a sort of deferential salute. The Pole poured out a glass of raki for the fat woman, who, though a Mohammedan, was not adverse to alcohol. She smacked her lips loudly; the man with the bag-pipes gave vent to his feelings in a more awful

sound than before; the lutes struck up in different keys, and the ball began.

The two girls whirled round each other, first slowly, and then increased their pace till their long black tresses stood out at right angles from their bodies. The perspiration poured down their cheeks. The old lady, who was seated on a divan, now uncrossed her legs, beating her brass ankle-rings the one against the other, she added yet another noise to the din which prevailed. The girls snapped their castanets, and commenced wriggling their bodies around each other with such velocity that it was impossible to recognize the one from the other. All of a sudden, the music stopped. The panting dancers threw themselves down on the laps of the musicians.

"What do you think of the performance?" said Vankovitch to me, as he poured out another glass of raki for the dancers. "It is real hard work, is it not?" Then, without waiting for an answer, he continued, "The Mohammedans who read of European balls, and who have never been out of Turkey, cannot understand people taking any pleasure in dancing. What is the good of it when I can hire some one else to dance for me?" is the remark.

"They are not very wrong," I here observed;

"that is, if they form an idea of European dances from their own. Our Lord Chamberlain would soon put a stop to these sort of performances in England."

"The Lord Chamberlain, who is he?" inquired an Armenian who was present, and who spoke French.

"He is an official who looks after public morals."

"And do you mean to say that he would object to this sort of a dance?"

"Yes."

"But this is nothing," said Vankovitch. "When there is a marriage festival in a harem, the women arrange their costumes so that one article of attire may fall off after another during the dance. The performers are finally left in very much the same garb as our first parents before the fall. We shall be spared this spectacle, for my wife is here. The gipsies will respect her presence because they know that she is a European."

Now the girls, calling upon the old woman, insisted that she too should dance. The raki had mounted into the old dame's head. Nothing loath, she acceded to their request; rising to her feet, she commenced a *pas seul* in front of the engineer. First shrugging her shoulders, and

then wriggling from head to toe, as if she were suffering from St. Vitus's dance, she finally concluded by kneeling before my hostess, and making a movement as if she would kiss her feet.

The following morning, and just before my departure, the Pole, who had come to say good-bye to me, called Osman to his side.

"The Effendi is paying two medjidis a day for his horses," remarked Vankovitch, "and six piastres for a chicken! Oh! Osman! thou descendant of a line of thieves! What is the meaning of this?"

The Turk changed colour for a moment; but then, collecting himself, replied,—

"The Effendi's horses are not like other horses, they eat more, and work more. We and he, too, we all like large chickens. The Effendi is rich, and he pays; he is big, and he eats a great deal. He is not giving more money for barley now than he gave when he was in Constantinople. The people at the Khans tell me the price, I give them what they ask. It would not do for me to be mean with my lord's gold. In future I shall know better. I will find out the proper value of everything, and will only pay what is just."

I interrupted him.

"Osman," I said, "you are a thief! However, as we leave Yuzgat to-day, there is no time for me to get another servant. Only, beware! for if I find you deceiving me any more, not all the hairs in the Prophet's beard shall save you from being discharged."

"The Effendi knows what is best," said Osman coolly. "He has brain, and I—I am the dust in his sight. Another time we will not give so much for our barley, we will tighten our purse-strings to the chicken-sellers. We have all been deceived, we will be so no longer."

We rode through an undulating country, in the direction of Sivas. The track was firm and good; there was an abundant supply of water throughout the district, numerous flocks and herds were grazing by the side of the path.

After marching for six hours and a half, we halted at a Turkoman village, called Kulhurdook, which contained forty-five mud hovels. With much difficulty I obtained accommodation in a filthily dirty barn. Here our horses were also sheltered; side by side with them stood several cows and oxen. A small piece of carpet covered the ground in one corner of the building. The proprietor, bringing me a pillow, which once had been white, but was now black with dirt,

placed it under my head, Radford and Osman lying down by the side of the horses.

There were several mostaphas, or men belonging to the last army reserve, in this village. They eagerly inquired if there would be war, but did not express any wish to fight their country's battles. This struck me as the more remarkable, for elsewhere I had observed great martial ardour amongst the rural classes. I afterwards learnt that several men who had been enlisted from this village had been killed in Servia, hence the unwillingness of the mostaphas to go to what they considered certain death.

I tried to sleep: this was impossible; some little insects, which the manager of the Crystal Palace advertises as "industrious," proved their industry by making fierce onslaughts on my body. Repeated groans from Osman made me aware that even his skin was not proof against the attack; whilst my English servant, who had given up all idea of sleeping, was walking about with a pipe in his mouth, and probably doing anything but bless his master who had brought him to such an out-of-the-way region.

"Can you not sleep, Radford?" I inquired.

"Sleep, sir! No! They are running up my legs like coach 'osses. Hosman's skin is like an

ironclad, but they give him no peace; they worry awful, that they do. I have been trying to smoke them off me, but 'bacca is nothing to these fleas. We shall be eaten alive if we stay here much longer—I know we shall!"

Having come to much the same conclusion, I ordered him to saddle the horses, and, to the astonishment of the proprietor of the hovel, we left our quarters three hours before daybreak.

Presently the country became more mountainous. It reminded me a good deal of the Saxon Switzerland, the scenery being very picturesque as our path wound round some wooded slopes.

We were in a country abounding with pine forests. The telegraph-wire to Sivas was stretched not far from our track. Many saw-mills, turned by the mountain streams, showed where the telegraph-posts had been made; they had then been dragged by oxen to their destination.

Our road ran through a pleasant valley, and by the side of a mountain stream known as the Gogderi Soo. In a few hours we arrived at a river, called the Tchekar Ermak. It is crossed by a weak stone bridge, the stream being about thirty yards wide by four deep. We halted for the night

at the village of Tchirklik, a two days' march, or thirteen hours from Kulhurdook.

I was accommodated in a house which actually possessed two rooms. They were not constructed in the side of a hill, as the other dwellings in the neighbourhood, but of wood—one room being reserved for the proprietor's cattle, sheep, and camels, the other for himself and harem.

I was permitted to sleep in the stable. Osman, with Radford and our horses, were lodged in a hovel at the other end of the village.

In the middle of the night I awoke with a feeling of suffocation, my throat was dry and parched, my eyes began to smart; a crackling noise overhead could be heard. It gradually dawned upon me that the house was on fire. I now discovered that the flames from the fireplace had ignited some boards in the chimney: they, in their turn, had set fire to the roof. If the proprietor, who was sleeping in the next room, were not immediately aroused, his house would in all probability be destroyed. The building was surrounded by a courtyard with high mud walls. The space outside the dwelling was infested by dogs. They at once came smelling around me.

Shutting the door, to prevent the flames from bursting out inside, I went to the harem. The

entrance was barred from within. The proprietor and his wives were fast asleep, they paid no attention to the noise which I made at the door.

It is of no use standing upon any ceremony with a man when his house is being burnt down: drawing my revolver, I fired two shots in the air; thinking that the sound of the reports would arouse the sleeping inmates. The effect was instantaneous: the whole family awoke, the man, greatly alarmed, thinking that an attack was being made on the village by a tribe of Kurds; slowly drawing the bolt, he looked through a crack in the door.

"Come!" I said, "your house is on fire! Be quick, or it will be burned down, and your camels and oxen be suffocated!"

The proprietor bounded out of the room. He was followed by the harem; the ladies, in the confusion, did not think of covering their faces, and were very scantily attired. They ran to a well in the yard and brought some pitchers of water. The proprietor by this time had climbed to the roof of his house. It was a windy night. The gusts were a source of considerable inconvenience to the water-bearers; their hands being occupied with the pitchers, they could not arrange their

garments. The latter fluttered above the ladies' heads, to the great discomfort of the proprietor, who, much enraged at his house being on fire, was equally annoyed at his wives' legs being exposed to the view of an unbeliever.

To relieve his mind, I clambered on to the roof. From this position the ladies' limbs could no longer be seen. After pouring several buckets of water on the charred rafters, we managed to extinguish the flames.

CHAPTER XXI.

Sileh Zela—Its position—The old citadel—The soil in the neighbourhood—A battalion of infantry—The Caimacan—The audience-chamber—The Cadi—The battalion going to Samsoun—The local authorities—The Colonel—England would be neutral—What, desert her friend of the Crimea?—An ally in Austria — Andrassy — An old Imaum—Propensity for fighting—A Christian Bishop—The most bellicose members of society—Yakoob Khan of Kashgar — The Russians and the Chinese — The Khivans, Bokharians, and Turkomans—A rising of the Poles — The ancient city — A secret passage — My tea and sugar—Osman has a sweet tooth—My lord's liberality praised—Osman to kneel on his own coat—Tartars—Lazy husbands—A plain planted with tobacco—Mountains covered with vines—Many-coloured sand-hills—A wonderful phenomenon—Bazar—Pacha Williams—Teesdale—Kars—Is Pacha Williams still alive?

It was a bright moonlight night. Not thinking it likely that we should obtain any more sleep, I determined to start at once, and take advantage of the weather. Desiring Radford and Osman, who had been aroused by the reports of my

revolver, to saddle the horses, we set off in the direction of Sileh Zela, a town which contains 3000 houses, and a barracks which will hold at a pinch 1500 soldiers.

Sileh Zela stands in the centre of a natural basin, the hills which form its sides being at a distance of six or seven miles from the town. A small rising ground near the principal street is occupied by the ruins of an old citadel. A stream runs through the heart of the city. The soil in the neighbourhood is very rich; corn abounds throughout the district. The inhabitants do not seem to have suffered from the famine which a few years ago so depopulated the Angora district.

Half a battalion of infantry, about 400 strong, was drilling in a plain immediately in front of the town. The inhabitants had turned out, men and women, to witness the instruction of the troops. The white dresses of the ladies, contrasting with the blue uniforms, red caps, and the many-coloured dresses of the inhabitants, formed a bright and vivid picture. It was a glorious day. The sun poured down its rays with a force much more suggestive of July than January. The drill was just over as we neared the town. We rode into Sileh at the head of the regiment, the band,

which consisted of about twenty musicians, performing a wild and discordant march. Halting at the house of the Caimacan, I dismounted and proceeded to pay him a visit. He was in the audience-chamber, surrounded by clerks, who were on their knees, and submitting different documents for his approval.

The great man himself was squatted on a divan; the members of the town council were by his side. The Cadi, whose head was enveloped in a gigantic yellow turban, was engaged in smoking a long chibouk. A crowd of men were in the anteroom, some with petitions in their hands, others apparently prisoners, judging by the guards who stood beside them.

It was evidently a busy day. The Caimacan, not taking any notice of my arrival, continued attaching his seal to the different papers.

At last he stopped, and, turning to me, salaamed and apologized for his apparent rudeness. It appeared that the half battalion which I had seen drilling was to march the following morning for Constantinople, *viâ* Samsoun. The Caimacan was engaged in making arrangements for its departure. Carriers would have to be sent forward to the different villages between Sileh Zela and Samsoun, to apprise the local authorities

of the approaching arrival of the troops. The chief difficulty which the Caimacan experienced was the want of money, he presently observed, "*Asker tchok, lakin para yoke*," "We have plenty of soldiers, but no paras" (money).

The colonel of the battalion now entered the room, and after having been introduced to me, observed that he had heard in the event of hostilities England would be neutral.

"What! desert her old friend of the Crimea?" said the Caimacan, turning to me. And the Cadi, grinning in a ghastly manner at the rest of the company, remarked that England had many paras, and that perhaps she would send some of them to the Sultan.

This created a revulsion of feeling in my favour —the assembly having been a little annoyed at the colonel's statement about the neutrality of Great Britain.

"Well," I said, "you will probably have an ally in Austria."

"An ally in Austria!" said the colonel; "no, certainly not. There are more Slavs than Magyars in the Emperor Francis Joseph's dominions. However, Andrassy, a Hungarian, is at the head of affairs, and by all accounts he rules the emperor. Perhaps Andrassy may prevent

Austria from allying herself with Russia against us."

"We shall have to fight our own battles this time," continued the colonel; "and, please God, we will win."

An old Imaum, who was seated in a corner, now put in a word, and said that if there were a war, he too would go at the head of the Imaums. I had observed this same propensity for fighting amidst other Mohammedan priests. In fact in Asia as in Europe the most bellicose members of society are often those gentlemen whose profession is that of peace.[1]

"We shall have Yakoob Khan of Kashgar with us," observed the Caimacan.

"No we shall not," replied the colonel; "the Russians have stirred up a quarrel between Yakoob and the Chinese, so as to prevent him giving us any assistance."

"Will any other Mohammedan states help you?" I inquired.

"Yes, all of them will fight for Islam."

[1] Whilst writing these lines I have come across some verses written by a Bishop who calls himself a Christian, and an answer to them by an American writer. The Bishop seems to have forgotten that his mission is one of peace. His verses will be found in Appendix XI. vol. ii. pp. 361, 362.

"Russia is large," continued the officer, "but she will have to divide her forces. She will have to be on her guard against the Khivans, Bokharians, and Turkomans in Asia, she must also protect herself against a rising of the Poles in Europe."

The Caimacan, now rising from the divan, walked with me to a small house in the neighbourhood which was reserved for the use of travellers.

There were very few Armenians in Sileh, the population being made up almost entirely of the followers of the Prophet. The ancient city is nearly a mile from the present site, and tradition tells us that it was built upon the so-called mound of Semiramis. I found the castle in a very dilapidated state, the wall round it bore signs of having been constructed from the ruins of some very ancient edifice; here and there were heavy blocks of marble and other broken débris which had been let into the sides of the enclosure.

According to the inhabitants, there is a secret passage leading from the citadel to a small square several hundred yards below the hill; this is very likely the case, for although now a third-rate town, Sileh was once a city of considerable military importance.

Whilst I was looking at the antiquities, Osman

had been engaged in buying some tea and sugar, the supply which I had brought from Constantinople being almost entirely exhausted, the tea and sugar having gone more rapidly than the other provisions. On my remarking this to Radford, I was informed that Osman had a sweet tooth, and had declared that tea was good for his stomach.

I called the Turk to my side.

"Osman," I said, "you have nearly finished my tea and sugar. What is the meaning of it?"

"Effendi, I like tea, I like sugar; but what I like most of all is to hear my lord's liberality praised. Whenever I am drinking tea, and the village people see me putting much sugar in my glass, they honour me. In this manner they honour my lord."

"I should like to be honoured in some other way for the future," I observed; "and Radford tells me that you are always praying instead of saddling the baggage-horses."

"Quite true, sir," remarked Radford, who gathered from my gestures what the conversation was about. "Quite true; he has worn off the nap of my new great coat a-praying on it. He is always on his knees whenever there is some work to do."

"Now for the future, Osman," I continued, "should I give orders to commence loading the animals at daybreak, you must get up two hours before sunrise: there will be then ample time for your devotions. In the meantime, when you pray, you are to kneel on your own jacket, and not on Radford's."

"Is my brother angry?" said the Turk, pointing to his fellow-servant.

"Yes."

"Well, I will not offend him any more."

And shaking hands with the Englishman, Osman manifested his friendship by borrowing a little tobacco.

On leaving Sileh Zela we rode by numerous gardens, planted with all kinds of fruit-trees, and enclosed by high walls built for the most part of dried mud. The road then continued through a series of vast circular basins, each from six to seven miles in diameter, and similar to the one which surrounded the town. The walls of these basins were formed of many coloured sand-hills. The plains below were sowed with every kind of grain.

We passed Tartars on their way to Sileh Zela, the women walking along the road, and the lazy husbands on horseback, riding in front of their wives.

Turkoman and Circassian villages abound throughout this district. The inhabitants were eager to hear about the war. When the Russians drove the Circassians from the Caucasus, the Sultan gave the exiles land in Anatolia. The wild mountaineers thirst for the opportunity of revenging themselves upon the Muscovites.

We left the corn-growing country behind us, and emerged upon a plain thickly planted with tobacco. On one side of the track, the mountains were covered with vines, on the other were many-coloured sand-hills.

Presently a wonderful phenomenon presented itself to us. A thick, black cloud, which all the morning had hung above a mountain-top, burst over our heads, and then being gradually wafted onward, it poured down its waters on the sand-hills. The sun, which was shining brightly, formed a magnificent rainbow—the glorious orb joined earth to sky, its matchless colouring lit up the whole of the firmament.

The waters dashed down the sides of the hills. The torrent bore with it a million particles of coloured sand. In a moment the rivulets at our feet ran white, red, and then crimson. The thunder roared in the distance. A flash of lightning streaked the horizon with gold.

The sun was setting ere we reached our halting-place, and as we rode up the main street of the village of Bazar, our horses had to wade through about three feet of water—the result of the recent storm. I obtained quarters for the night in a small, but clean wooden house belonging to a Turkish gentleman. He was formerly an officer in the army, and had been employed at Kars during the siege.

"Pacha Williams proved himself to be a great man," observed my host. "He was always busy, and not like other Pachas, who spend their lives in the harem. He went out at all hours of the night to inspect the fortifications. There was another Englishman with him—a young man of fair complexion, but with a heart like a lion."

"Teesdale?" I observed.

"Yes, that was his name. The hearts of our poor Osmanlis were cheered when they saw this young Englishman sharing all their privations, never grumbling, and always cheerful. If the war breaks out again, God grant that you may send us many more such officers! Is Pacha Williams still alive?"

"Yes."

"Is he a very great man in your country?"

"Yes."

"You English are a wonderful nation," continued my host. "You reward the Pachas who are brave and skilful. In our country if a captain has a relation in the harem of the grand vizier, the officer is sure to rise to high command; but with you a man must have merit to succeed."

CHAPTER XXII.

Tokat—The Caimacan of the town—The battalion is to march to Samsoun—A naturalized Englishman—The road from Tokat to Sivas—The population of Tokat—The rich inhabitants bribe the gendarmes—The want of funds—The officials' salaries in arrear—Armenian schools in Tokat—The Greeks; not much reliance to be placed upon them—Khiva—Tashkent—Samarcand—Mussulmans in India—The Black Sea and the Russian fleet—Old soldiers in Tokat—The Armenians and Greeks to be supplied with fire-arms—Good governors—Osman Bey—A Circassian on Russian atrocities—A statement by the Russian authorities—Seven hundred families near Labinsky—Men, women, and children at the breast butchered—English sympathizers with Russia—The Russians sow the seeds of dissension amongst the Circassians—Yonn Bek—Many gold imperials offered to him.

It is only a few hours' march from Bazar to Tokat, the track running parallel to the river of the same name. There are many villages by the side of the stream. The valley widens, and then narrows again as we proceed towards the town. Tokat at last lies before us. It is a long,

straggling city, and on the left bank of the river.

We were met by a Zaptieh. He conducted me to a house set apart for travellers. Shortly afterwards I received a visit from the Caimacan (governor). This official was an active, bustling little man, and much more energetic than any of the governors I had previously met.

An order had arrived for him to send 1000 men immediately to Samsoun. The battalion would march the following morning at daybreak. He proposed that I should go and see the start.

An engineer now called, a Pole by birth, but a naturalized Englishman. He was engaged in making a road from Tokat to Sivas; he had been in Tokat five years, and the work was not half completed. Indeed, judging by the system adopted for the construction of public works in Anatolia, it will be a wonder if the road is ever finished.

According to the engineer, Tokat has a population of 25,000 inhabitants. Of these there are 8000 men who should each work four days a year at the construction of the road.

"It is a pitiable sight," continued the Pole. "The Zaptiehs are ordered to bring the people. A rich inhabitant bribes the gendarmes; they leave

him and seize some impecunious individual. The latter is brought to me, and I tell the fellow to commence digging. The man digs so long as I am in sight, but the moment my back is turned, down goes the shovel, and he lights a cigarette. The result is that I have been here five years, and only five miles of road are finished."

The engineer complained of the want of funds in the public chest. His pay was only 10*l.* per month, and it was never paid punctually. Meantime, the authorities had discharged several engineers in their employ, on the ground that every piastre in the treasury was required for the maintenance of the troops.

There were several Armenian schools in Tokat, and the Turks and Christians got on very well together. However, the Caimacan was of opinion that not much reliance could be placed upon the Greeks, i. e. in the event of a war between Turkey and Russia.

"They are very cunning," remarked the governor. "They will not declare themselves at once, but will wait a little, and hang back to see which side is the strongest. They still dream of the old Greek Empire, and think that some day Constantinople will be a Greek capital. This is not very likely to happen," he continued. "If

Russia were to conquer us, and to take Constantinople, she would not be willing to hand it over to the Greeks. What Russia takes she keeps. Look at the Caucasus. Look at the Crimea. Look at Khiva, Tashkent, and Samarcand. Some day she will try and conquer India, and what shall you do then?"

"Probably take our Indian troops, and, joining with the Afghans, and inhabitants of Kashgar, drive Russia out of Central Asia," I remarked.

"That is easier said than done," said the governor. "But, talking of the natives of India, is it true, as I have read in our newspapers, that many Mussulmans in India have petitioned your Queen to help the Sultan?"

"Yes," I replied, "I believe so."

"Then why does she not oblige them? Your interests are bound up with our interests. We do not wish to lose Constantinople. It would be our death-blow. It would be your death-blow if the Black Sea belonged solely to Russia, for her ships could remain there in perfect safety, and, running out at any moment, might attack your commerce in the Mediterranean."

"There are a great many old soldiers in Tokat," observed the engineer, "men who fought in the Crimea. They have asked me if there is any

chance of England joining Turkey, and are longing to serve, with English pay and English rations."

"The men who leave to-morrow go without any pay," said the Caimacan, "but they march cheerfully. We shall have to fight it out to the end," he continued; "if Russia does not destroy Turkey, Turkey must destroy Russia! I will sell my watch and everything I have in the world to raise funds for the war. We must all do the same."

Whilst we were conversing an order arrived for the Caimacan to supply all the Armenians and Greeks in Tokat with firearms, and have them instructed in drill.

"I must go," he observed, and, rising from the divan, he left me alone with the engineer.

"He is a most energetic man," said the Pole, pointing to the retreating figure of the Caimacan. "If Turkey had more governors like him, she would not be reduced to her present straits. The great mistake in this country is the continual change of Caimacans. When we have a good governor, we never keep him for more than six months; the present man has been here about that time, he does not rob the people, and is thoroughly honest: we shall probably soon lose him."

Several of the principal persons in the town

now came to call upon me; amongst others, a certain Osman Bey, a Circassian, and the chief of a large band which had emigrated from the Caucasus a few years previous. He was dressed in the Circassian style, with a sheep-skin coat, tightly buckled round his waist, embroidered leather trousers and high boots; a black Astrakhan cap surmounted his bronzed features. He was a fine tall fellow, and immensely popular with the inhabitants of Tokat.

After conversing for a little while about my journey, and the state of the roads between Tokat and Erzeroum, he proposed that I should accompany him to his house, drink tea there, and be introduced to his relatives. The engineer came with us. After walking through some lanes, where the mud reached considerably above my ankles, we arrived before a square-built, whitewashed house. A solid wooden door, absolutely possessing a knocker —an article of luxury not known in Tokat, save to the richer inhabitants, gave admission to a small courtyard. This, in its turn, led to the apartments reserved for Osman Bey and the members of his family.

He had sent a servant on before, to say that he was on his way. About fifteen Circassian gentlemen were seated around the room.

"We Circassians have heard a great deal of your nation," said Osman Bey, as he motioned to me to take a seat. "We once thought that England was going to help us to drive the Russians out of our country. However, you did not come; they outnumbered us, and they had artillery opposed to our flint guns. What could we do? We resisted as long as possible, and then, sooner than be slaves, came here."

"If there is a war, shall you all go to the front?" I inquired.

"Yes, every able-bodied man amongst us. We do not pay any taxes to the Sultan; he gave us our land, and we owe him a debt of gratitude. Not only that," continued the speaker, and at the same time drawing a long, keen knife from his sash, and flipping his nail against the blade, "but we shall have an opportunity of cutting a few Muscovite throats!"

"I hope you will not kill the women and children!" I observed. "Nobody cares about the men; but in Europe we have a horror of people who massacre women and children."

"We shall do as the Russians do, and as they have always done," observed my host grimly. "They have killed our old men, have cut to pieces pregnant women, and have tossed the chil-

dren on the bayonets, whilst the soldiers have satisfied their lust upon our wives, and burnt them to death afterwards![1] Well, if they do the same thing now, we shall follow the example set us, and shall continue doing so, until England or some other power interferes to save our countrymen from the devilish tyranny of these Muscovite butchers. Let me give you one instance of their cruelty. A few years ago the Russian authorities informed the Circassians that whoever wished might leave the Imperial dominions and go elsewhere. This was probably done to discover what natives were well disposed or otherwise to the Russian rule. There was no real intention on the part of the Government to allow any of its subjects to pass the frontier. Seven hundred families belonging to some villages near the town of Labinsky, thought that it was a *bonâ fide* permission. Leaving their district, they started for the Turkish frontier. A short time afterwards they

[1] This statement, coming from a Circassian, may be deemed by some people in England, like the Right Hon. Robert Lowe, M.P., who believe that Russia is the protector of the unprotected, and the refuge of those who have no other refuge, as hardly worthy of credence. Unfortunately for humanity it is confirmed, so far as the massacre of pregnant women and of children is concerned, by the official report of a British Consul. See Appendix VII. vol. ii. p. 349.

were surrounded by Russian troops, cavalry and artillery, and ordered to return. The fugitives said that they had permission to leave Russia. The officer in command insisted that they should at once retrace their steps. The command was not immediately obeyed, the troops fired at the villagers, and then charged them with the bayonet; only thirteen Mohammedans survived to tell the tale. All the rest, men, women, and children at the breast, were cut to pieces."

"Are these assertions really true?" I said to another Circassian.

"We know it, to our cost," he replied. "This is only one instance which Osman Bey has just given you, and which you have written down in your note-book; but there are many more equally horrible. The Russians have made a hell of our beautiful country. They are worse than the fiend himself."

"Do your country-people like the Russians?" said Osman Bey.

"Some do," I replied; "but they do not believe in these horrible cruelties which you have been just relating to me."

"Well, then, tell them to travel through our country—that is, if the Russians will let them—to

go to our villages and talk to the country people; but not in the presence of Russians, as the poor sufferers would be afraid to speak, knowing well the fate which would await them when their questioners had departed. Let any of the people of England, who now sympathize with Russia, do this, and then let them form an opinion about the merits of the case."

"When you return to your own country will you publish what I have said to you?" said Osman Bey.

"Yes," I said, "every line. Listen to what I have written, so that there may be no error."

And I translated to him my notes, the engineer aiding me in the task.

"Are all your countrymen of one mind in their hatred of the Russians?" I inquired.

"Unfortunately, no," said Osman Bey. "The authorities have been clever enough to sow the seeds of dissension amongst our ranks. For example, they will often give the post of 'stanishna' (a local authority) in the different villages to a Circassian of a low degree. This gives him authority over our nobles. Ill-feeling is thus created between the two classes; it is utilized by the Russians."

"One of our number is doing his best to avenge

himself on the Muscovites," said another of the party, a good-looking young fellow, apparently about twenty years old, and Osman Bey's nephew. "His name is Yonn Bek; he has taken up his abode in the Farsa Shaguash mountain near Ekaterinograd, and kills the Russians whenever he can meet them. He has been pursued; but he has depôts in the mountain where he keeps provisions, and the Russians have never been able to trace him to his lair. The authorities have offered Yonn Bek a great many gold imperials if he would leave the country, as the man has done so much mischief there; but Yonn declines, and says that if the Russians have not been able to capture him in eight years, and he has been able to do them so much damage, what will not happen to the foe when the war breaks out and he is joined by other men like himself?"

CHAPTER XXIII.

The servant of the house—The Onbashee—Five piastres—Osman detected—The guilty man—Vankovitch's remarks—The sentence—May I put Osman in prison?—The barracks—Two old Khans—The women weeping—Immense enthusiasm—Numbers of volunteers—Parading for the march—Men crying—We shall eat the Russians—The Sergeant—The Major of the battalion—The Dervish—A Circassian—The Imaum of the regiment—The Muleteer—Baggage animals required for the regiment—A bitter cry—The women's wail—The old Major—The soldier's hymn—The standard of the battalion—Go in safety—God be with you!

THE following morning the servant of the house in which I was lodging entered the room and observed that a Zaptieh corporal, or Onbashee, who had escorted us into the town on the day of my arrival, wished to see me.

"Tell him to come in," I said. In a few minutes the Onbashee opened the door; approaching me, he took from his waistcoat five piastres, and placed them in the palm of his hand.

"What is this for?" I inquired.

"Osman!" answered the Onbashee, with a sigh.

"Osman! What has he been doing?"

"Osman gave them to me, Effendi; but you said that he was to give me half a medjidi—he has kept the difference for himself!"

It now flashed across my mind that the previous evening I had desired Osman to give the corporal half a medjidi as a baksheesh, and that I had told him to do so in the presence of the servant of the house. The latter had informed the Onbashee. Osman, who wished to appropriate to himself the difference between five piastres and the larger coin, was thus detected.

I sent for the culprit. He was aware that his knavery had been discovered. Instead of coming to me with his usual assertion that he was the most industrious man in the world, he stood in the corner of the room, an object of derision to the Onbashee, who was regretting the loss of his half medjidi, and to the servant of the house, who had been the means of disclosing Osman's dishonesty.

Addressing the guilty man, I asked him why he had not given the Zaptieh the half medjidi, and added that the previous evening, when he had told me of the expenses of the day, he had charged me with that sum.

Osman had hardly anything to say for himself. Presently he stammered out something about his only having five piastres in his pocket.

"That is a lie, Effendi!" here interrupted the Onbashee. "He had many coins in his hand when he gave me the five piastres."

I at once made up my mind to get rid of Osman. Vankovitch's remarks about the Turk's dishonesty also recurred to my memory. Osman was undoubtedly a rogue; I determined to procure another servant.

"Osman," I said, "you have robbed a Mohammedan, a follower of Islam, and one of your own religion. If you had confined yourself to robbing me, I could have understood it, for you might have reasoned to yourself as follows: 'The Effendi is a giaour, and there is gold in his purse.' But to rob a brother Mohammedan, and a poor man; to rob him of the pittance which I had given him,—this I can only understand by the assumption that you are a greater scoundrel than I thought you were! You are no longer my servant. You darken the threshold no longer!"

"I am innocent, Effendi!" cried Osman.

"Well, prove your innocence, and I will say no more about the matter."

"Effendi, the Onbashee is a liar!"

"Very likely, but then the servant must be a liar as well, and he saw you give the five piastres to the corporal. Now what interest has the servant in telling a lie about the matter?"

This was too much for the delinquent; lowering his eyes, he walked out of the room, through a long row of servants, who had come from the neighbouring houses to hear me administer justice.

The sentence appeared to give great satisfaction to the Onbashee.

"May I put Osman in prison?" he eagerly inquired.

"I have no authority on such matters," I replied.

"No, Effendi, but the Caimacan likes you, and if you asked him to do so, he would put Osman in prison. Just a day or so, Effendi! Please do!"

"Why do you want to put him in gaol?" I asked.

"Because, if he is once shut up, we will not let him out till he has returned me the difference between your present and the five piastres."

"No," I said; "here is the difference," at the same time giving him a small sum of money. "But now go and inquire in the town for a man who wants a situation, as I want a servant immediately."

Just then a sergeant entered the room. He brought word from the Caimacan that he was waiting for me, and that the battalion would leave Tokat in about half an hour.

I at once rode to the barracks. They consisted of two old Khans, which surrounded a courtyard, the Khans being used as barracks when there were troops in Tokat, and at other times of the year as lodgings for wayfarers. The streets leading to the Khans were lined with women, muffled up in long white sheets, and weeping piteously. The battalion was drawn up in two ranks inside the courtyard. The men were standing at ease, and engaged in talking to their numerous friends and relatives. Immense enthusiasm prevailed amidst the bystanders. Numbers of volunteers were offering their services.

"Look at these men, sir," observed Radford, who was riding behind me; "they do not look as if they liked going as soldiers: bless my heart alive, if they ain't a-crying!"

I glanced in the direction he was pointing, and saw thirty or forty men with most woe-begone faces, and some of them in tears.

"Why are you crying?" I said to one of their party. "Are you afraid of being killed?"

"No, Effendi, we want to go with our brothers

in the battalion and to fight by their side; but the major will not take us, he says that his battalion is complete. Do ask him to let us accompany him! Our hearts are full of sorrow at being left behind."

A captain in the regiment, a short, podgy-looking man, with very fat cheeks, now came to them, and tried to console the volunteers by saying that their turn would come soon, and that they should go with the next battalion.

It was a curious spectacle: the soldiers dressed in a neat dark blue serge uniform, and with their feet in sandals, surrounded by little knots of relatives clad in every kind of attire that can well be imagined; fathers embracing sons, brothers rubbing cheeks with brothers, and the sergeant and corporals vainly endeavouring to get their men into some sort of order; the fat captain in the background engaged in trying to console the rejected volunteers; and the younger portion of the crowd looking inquisitively at the new Martini-Peabody rifles which had only arrived from Samsoun the previous evening. Some of the soldiery were showing how quick their rifles could be loaded and fired. The rapidity of the system created great astonishment amidst the crowd.

"The giaours come from the country where

these guns are made," said a bystander, pointing to Radford and myself.

"The giaours have more brain than we have," said another.

"If they help us, we shall eat the Russians!" exclaimed a third. We became the object of still more curiosity when a sergeant, coming to me, said that the Caimacan was in the major's room, drinking coffee, and hoped that I would join him there.

"He is going to drink coffee with the Governor —he is a great man!" said one of the bystanders. Some of the volunteers, rushing up, entreated me to intercede with the Caimacan, and perhaps he could induce the major of the battalion to take them with him to the war.

The major, and several other officers were squatted on a carpet in a small and rather dirty room overlooking the courtyard. The Caimacan was seated on a chair, a dervish sat by his side. The latter individual was a portly-looking man, wrapped up in a roll of brown cloth, and with a gigantic sugar-loaf hat on his head. The hat was made of grey cloth, and would have made the fortune of the leader of a nigger band. Several more officers now came into the room, amongst others the fat captain. They each in turn bent before

the dervish, who placed his hands above their heads, and pronounced some sort of a blessing.

A Circassian entered the building. He presently informed us that five thousand of his nation, who resided in the neighbourhood of Tokat, had expressed a wish to go to the seat of war, and to bring with them their own horses and arms.

By this time the sergeants had succeeded in arranging their men in the ranks, and the major going downstairs, followed by the Imaum or chaplain of the regiment, the latter addressed the battalion. The Imaum was attired in a lieutenant's uniform, but with a green turban round the fez, as a distinctive mark of his profession.

The Chaplain's discourse was not a long one. It was listened to with great attention by the populace. When he had finished the ranks were again broken by a crowd of eager, excited Mussulmans, who rushed up to embrace their friends.

As I was descending the steps, my attention was called to a man who was seated on the stair. He was sobbing like a child; at the same time striking his chest with the palms of his hands.

"What is the matter?" I inquired.

On his looking up, I recognized the muleteer whom I had hired to bring my baggage from

Sileh Zela to Tokat. The man on seeing me sprang to his feet, then throwing himself on the ground, he began to embrace my legs, at the same time kissing my boots.

It appeared that several baggage animals were required for the battalion which was about to march. The Zaptiehs of Tokat had pressed the muleteer into their service, and had taken his mules.

"Do speak for me, Effendi!" he said. "They will take me to Kars. I shall be a ruined man. And my wife expects me home—she is in a delicate state of health; I shall shortly be a father."

"It is useless," said the Caimacan, who overheard his prayers. "We must have baggage animals," he continued; "you will not be taken to Kars, only to Samsoun; you will be paid for the hire of your animals. Dry your eyes, and do not block up the steps."

"It is a great pity, and I am very sorry for these poor fellows," observed the Caimacan, turning to me; "but what can we do? It is war time, or very soon will be so: some of us must suffer."

"Listen to those poor women there," he continued, as we rode through the gate, preceded by the brass band of the regiment playing a melan-

choly march. A deep wail could be heard even above the noise of the instruments. The wives, mothers, and other female relatives of the soldiers, had not been permitted to enter the barracks; but from an early hour they had taken up a position along the streets. The bitter cry, which was joined in by hundreds of voices, announced to the people in the very outskirts of the town that the battalion was on the march.

Presently the band ceased playing; and the old major, his long white beard streaming in the wind, began singing the words: "God is great. There is but one God, the God, and there is but one Prophet, the Prophet, and he is the Prophet of God."

The soldiers took up the strain, ten thousand bystanders joined in the verse—it even silenced the women's wail—and resounded along the banks of the river. Here taken up by some people on the ruined citadel, the words were re-echoed back to us; there wafted by the breeze to an adjacent hamlet, the peasantry swelled the chorus. The standard of the battalion, with the crescent embroidered on a green border, was raised high in the air, and several of the crowd, rushing up to the major, implored him to take them in his ranks.

It was a striking scene—these weeping women in their shroud-like dresses; the many-coloured garments of the men; the excited soldiery—the still more excited major; and the immense religious enthusiasm.

Snow-capped mountains barred the way before us, and the river, its banks set fast with ice and hoar-frost, glittered in the distance, and reflected the rays of a midday sun.

Large stacks of wood had been piled up near the stream. The timber had been cut in the forests above the town, and been floated down the river to Tokat. It is chiefly used for smelting copper, the Government having some smelting works in the neighbourhood. According to my informant, they were established thirty years ago by a German; after his decease they had been bought by the Turkish authorities.

The Caimacan thought that he had accompanied the battalion far enough. Drawing a little on one side, we let the soldiers pass us. The standard-bearer waved his flag, the old major saluted by lowering the point of his sword as he rode past, and with the words, "Go in safety, God be with you. We shall meet in Erzeroum," we parted.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Osman Bey—A Circassian feud—Will there be a rising in the Caucasus?—If England were to help us—A wonderful servant—Mohammed—His Captain—An Armenian doctor—Business is flat—The Christian population to be armed—Visitors asking favours—Your reward will be in heaven—A subscription—Promotion through favouritism—A sad story—A cruel father—A servant arrested for debt—Failure of justice.

Soon afterwards I met Osman Bey, my acquaintance of the previous day. He was on the point of leaving for a Circassian hamlet in the neighbourhood. It appeared that a feud had arisen between the people of this village and another one in its vicinity; the Bey was going there to calm, if possible, the angry feelings of the inhabitants.

He remarked that in the event of war breaking out between Turkey and Russia he should go to the Caucasus.

"Will there be a great rising in that country?" I inquired.

"It is very doubtful," was the answer; "our people have risen several times;[1] no foreign power has assisted us, and the result is that we have been decimated by our enemy. My countrymen are afraid of doing anything, unless they feel certain that they will be aided in their attempt. If England were to help us," he continued, "and could only capture one Russian port on the Black Sea, the Circassians would have confidence, and there would be a rising throughout the length and breadth of our land."

On returning to my house I found the Zaptieh who had been defrauded by my late servant. He was awaiting me with a candidate for Osman's place.

"Effendi, I have brought you a wonderful fellow," said the gendarme; "if you send him with a message, he will fly; he will guard your purse more carefully than his own."

It appeared that the wonderful man's name was Mohammed; he was a redif soldier. His battalion would march in the course of a week or so

[1] For statement made by Circassians on this subject, see Appendix X. vol. ii. p. 353.

to Erzeroum. To avoid going with the troops he proposed that he should engage himself as my servant until we reached that town, and then he could join his battalion.

"But will your commanding officer give you leave to accompany me?" I inquired.

"If the Effendi asks him," interrupted the Zaptieh.

Mohammed was apparently not above twenty-five years of age. He had a pleasant, frank expression, and I determined to engage him, that is, if I could obtain the sanction of his captain.

I now went to see this officer. He at once agreed to the proposal; that is, if I would pledge myself to give up Mohammed at Erzeroum.

"How can I pledge myself?" I remarked, "he may run away on the road."

"That is true," said the officer; "but he is a straightforward fellow—he will not do so. If I had the power, I would let you take him as a servant for all the time that you remain in the country; but I have no authority to do this, I am merely a captain."

The matter was settled. Returning to my house, I informed the man of his officer's consent.

Mohammed was to have the same wages as Os-

man, and as he had a horse of his own, which he wished to take to Erzeroum, I was to pay for the forage of the animal, and could make use of him for the baggage. This would be very useful; hitherto I had been obliged to hire a horse, owing to my loss of Obadiah. Up to this time I had been travelling on the postal track. It was possible to find horses. After leaving Sivas, the next town I should reach, there would be no more postal-stations; I should then have to trust to my being able to hire animals from the peasantry, or be obliged to purchase another horse.

"I have a wife," said Mohammed; "will my lord give me a little money?"

"How much do you want?"

"Two liras."

"I wonder if he will bolt with the money, like the Tartar I engaged last winter in Orenburg." This idea at once occurred to my mind. On second thoughts, I remembered that he was well known to the Zaptieh, and to many of the other inhabitants of Tokat; so I acceded to his request.

An Armenian doctor called to see me. He had been educated in the States, and spoke English with a most unmistakable Yankee drawl.

"How is business here?" I inquired.

"Very flat," said the medical gentleman; "the people do not put much faith in doctors, that is, until they are really ill, and then we have a busy time of it. They pill themselves," he continued, "and go in for herbs and old women's remedies; they get them cheap, and grudge the money which they must pay to a regular practitioner."

"You do not look very well," said the doctor.

"Thank you, there is not much the matter," I replied. The fact was that I had a splitting headache, owing to the charcoal pan or mungo which warmed the apartment. The gas from the charcoal being lighter than the air, fills the upper part of the room. The Turks and Armenians generally squat on the floor. They do not feel the effects of the fumes so much as a person who is seated on the divan.

Another Armenian now paid me a visit. He was the telegraph inspector in Tokat, and he informed us that orders had just been sent from Constantinople to buy up all the available horses in this neighbourhood.

"Things look warlike," he continued, "and the doctor," pointing to his compatriot, "will have plenty of practice before long. The whole Christian population is to be armed. It is clear that the Government has not much faith in the Con-

ference, and is doing its best to prepare for war."

The Armenians in Tokat complained of the slack way in which justice was administered throughout that district. According to the doctor, if a man committed a crime, and could get away for a year or two and then return to his home, he would not be pursued by the authorities; that is, unless the aggrieved parties made a formal complaint.

"Yes," said another visitor, "three months ago fifty-four malefactors escaped from the prison. Forty of them shortly afterwards surrendered; the rest made their way to the mountains. Their ringleader, who is a murderer, has been recently seen in Tokat: no one has cared to arrest him."

Four young Turks entered the room; the eldest could not have been more than three-and-twenty.

"What do you want?" I inquired.

"We do not wish to go to the war," replied one of them, who took upon himself to be spokesman for the party.

"Why not?"

"Because we are married men and have children."

"I cannot help you."

"Yes, Effendi, you can; you might speak to

the Caimacan, and he could free us from military service."

"His duty is to send you to the front," observed the doctor.

"Yes, but he evidently likes the Frank, for we saw them riding together, and if the Effendi would only ask him, he could not be so inhospitable as to decline."

I was a little annoyed at this remark, and observed,—

"I certainly shall not ask for anything of the kind. Other people who have wives and children are obliged to go, then why not you?"

"But they did not love their wives so much as we love ours," persisted the man.

The Caimacan now called. Upon his arrival the four visitors, after grovelling almost in the dust before him, took their departure.

"What did they want?" said the Governor.

I told him.

"It is very unpatriotic of them," he observed. "The cunning little dogs, to ask you to intercede on their behalf! But they shall all go with the next battalion!"

I was evidently destined to have a succession of visitors on that afternoon, for no sooner had the Caimacan gone than another official arrived. He

at once commenced a conversation by saying that he had been employed in collecting the redif soldiery from the different villages in the neighbourhood, and had also started a subscription amongst the wealthier inhabitants to provide the men with warm shirts.

"You have acted very kindly, and doubtless with the best motives," I remarked. "Your reward will be in heaven."

"Yes," said the man, who did not seem quite to relish the idea of his reward being so indefinitely postponed; "but the Effendi is going to Sivas?"

"Yes."

"He will see the Pacha there."

"Very likely."

"Then will he tell the Pacha of my great merits, and ask him to give me some higher employment?"

"If it pleases Allah, you will receive some higher post," I piously observed. "Our destinies are in his hand."

"Yes," said the man, "so they are. But for all that, I wish that you would speak to the Pacha for me."

From the two examples I have here cited, it will readily be seen that a system of promotion through

favouritism is very deeply rooted amidst the Turks. I had been seen riding with the Caimacan. It was thought that I might see the Pacha at Sivas —this was quite sufficient to induce some of the inhabitants of Tokat to believe that any request I might make to the Pacha or Caimacan would necessarily be granted.

"It was fortunate," here remarked the engineer, "that you told Osman to give the baksheesh to a Corporal, and that a Turkish servant heard you give the order. If the fellow had been a Christian, the servant would never have taken the trouble to mention it to him. But the fact of the Corporal being a co-religionist was too much for the servant. It has enabled you to detect the fraud."

"This is one of the worst features of the country," he continued. "The Turks will not do anything to aid a Christian at the expense of a Mohammedan, even if the Mohammedan is most clearly in the wrong. And it is much the same with the Christians in respect to their co-religionists. The result is that the Armenians and Turks do not pull well together. The law, too, is faulty, and requires amendment."

"Let me give you an example," continued Mr. Gasparini, "and one which has come immediately

under my notice, for it affected my own servant. It sounds like a romance, but, alas! is too true! My servant's name is Karatel Mermenk Ovooloo. He is an Armenian; his mother died when he was a child; his father remarried, but behaved very badly to his second wife, continually illtreating her, and making his son bring another woman to the house. The lad was very fond of his stepmother, who was at that time seriously ill; at last he refused to bring his father's paramour to their home. The father beat him severely and apprenticed the lad to his own trade, that of a coppersmith. The mother soon afterwards died, with an anathema on her lips at her husband's paramour. The latter, strange to say, died herself three weeks afterwards. In the meantime, the father gave the boy three piastres a week for his clothes. The lad could not clothe himself for that sum, he left his home and went into service. The parent succeeded in having the boy turned away from several situations, but at last I took him. Now, only the other day, the father went to the Cadi, and swore that his son was in a coppersmith's business with himself, and in consequence must pay half the tax on his trade. There is no truth whatever in the statement, but the father's word has been taken,

and my servant arrested, and kept in prison for three days. The sum is only twenty-six piastres, I would gladly pay it myself, but I have no money; the government will not give me my salary; so here we are at a dead-lock."

CHAPTER XXV.

Mohammed's horse—The Effendi's barley—The road from Tokat to Sivas—A very pretty girl—Tchiflik—Complaints made against the Circassians—Highly cultivated soil—The Tchamlay Bel mountain—A Turk killed—A wonderful gun—Yenihan—The Yeldez Ermak—The Kizil Ermak—Sivas—A ruined citadel—The importance of Sivas from a military point of view—My entry into Sivas—The guard—An Italian engineer—Three American missionaries—A house pillaged.

The following morning, Mohammed arrived at an early hour, bringing with him his horse, a wretched brute to look at; he had not a particle of flesh on his bones, and was half blind with one eye.

"This is my horse, Effendi," said Mohammed proudly; "is he not a magnificent animal? My having this horse will save the Effendi the expense of hiring or buying another one."

"I hope that I shall get a baksheesh at Erzeroum," he added.

"Of course," I said; "that is, if the brute reaches Erzeroum. But it strikes me that you have not been giving him anything to eat lately!"

"No, Effendi, I was afraid that if he looked too well he would have been taken for the use of the troops; but no one will even glance at him as he is. He has a wonderful appetite, and will make up for lost time; no one will recognize him, after he has eaten the Effendi's barley for a day or two; he will soon be fat and strong."

The road from Tokat to Sivas is a good one for the first few hours. My friend the engineer's work had been very fairly done; our horses were able to get over the ground at from five to six miles an hour. The track led through a succession of hills and valleys. In some places the engineer had been obliged to cut the road for several hundred yards in the solid rock.

Presently we passed a small Circassian village. Several good-looking women, coming to the roadside, offered chickens and geese for sale. One of the Circassians was a very pretty girl, and would have carried off the palm amidst many European belles. Her face was not veiled. There was a great deal of expression in her large, dark eyes.

They flashed excitedly as she sought to induce me to buy her wares.

"I am tired of chicken," I said; "I should like a little meat."

"There is no meat here," replied the girl. "We ourselves live upon bread and eggs: buy some eggs."

And running back to a house, she brought out about fifty eggs; the price being eightpence of our money.

Now we came to Tchiflik, an Armenian village. Here there were thirty houses; and as six hours had sped by since we left Tokat, I determined to halt for the night, the more particularly as Mohammed's horse showed unmistakable signs of fatigue.

The Armenian in whose house I stopped, complained of his Circassian neighbours. According to him, they had hazy ideas as to the difference between *meum* and *tuum*. Several cows belonging to the villagers had recently disappeared. It was strongly suspected that some Circassians were implicated in the robbery.

The country in the neighbourhood was very highly cultivated. The farmers' granaries were full of corn. Hundreds of cows and cattle could be seen grazing along the side of the road.

We arrived at the Tchamlay Bel mountain. As we were ascending a narrow pass which overhung a steep precipice, the guide, a Zaptieh, observed that only five days previous a Turk had been killed on this very spot. It appeared that there was a band of brigands in the neighbourhood. Five of them had attacked a party of four Turkish merchants, who were returning from Sivas with, as it was believed, a considerable amount of gold on their persons. Three of the Turks ran away, leaving their companion, who showed fight, but was shot down; the brigands had taken away from him thirty-five liras, besides two horses. An hour later, when the news was brought to a village, several of the inhabitants turned out on horseback to pursue the robbers: it was too late, they had made their escape and carried off the booty.

"Do not be alarmed," said the guide as he concluded his story. "I am with you; the brigands will be afraid. Look here!" he carefully unstrapped a long, single-barrelled flint gun from his saddle-bow. The barrel was tied on to the stock by a piece of string.

"It is a wonderful gun," said the guide. "It belonged to my grandfather, I once shot a deer with it."

"Was the deer far off?" I inquired.

"Very far," was the reply. "So far," pointing to a rock about 1000 yards from us. It was clear that however well the guide might shoot with his gun, he was equally good with the long-bow. I began to be a little doubtful about the story he had just told us of the brigands.

We rested for a while at Yenihan, a large village with 200 houses; the population is composed half of Armenians and half of Turks. The Caimacan had gone to the mountains in search of some redif soldiery. He had experienced considerable difficulty in inducing these men to leave their homes, and join the army in the field.

There was nothing particular to see at Yenihan. Sivas was only nine hours distant: I determined to make a long march on the following day, and give our horses a rest in that city. The track was good. Ox-carts—the chief means of transporting baggage in this part of Anatolia—have no difficulty in travelling along the road to the Yeldez Ermak, a rapid stream which is about seventy yards wide. It is crossed by a good stone bridge on arches. The river, though fordable in the winter, would be impassable in the early spring if it were not for the bridge. It is a tributary of the Kizil Ermak, and meets that stream about twelve

miles S.E. of Sivas. The district is hilly, but is highly cultivated. In about four hours we reached the Kizil Ermak, a broad, deep river. It is crossed by a stone bridge. A road on the opposite bank leads to Divriki.

We did not cross the bridge, but continued on to Sivas, which lay before us, with a background of rising slopes. A citadel, in a ruined state, frowned down upon us from the centre of the city.

Sivas, the capital of Armenia Minor, is situated at the head of the valley of the Halys of the ancients. It is the most important military position in this part of Turkey. It commands the sole route which descends with the waters upon the plateau of Asia Minor. Sivas is the key to the Peninsula on the Asiatic side; the Turks ought to fortify this place, particularly when they are threatened in Asia Minor by the Russians. Should the latter succeed in forcing the first line of defence, consisting of Kars, Ardahan, and Bayazid, and afterwards take possession of Erzeroum, there will be no other fortified town between themselves and Scutari.

The governor had sent an officer with some Zaptiehs as an escort for our party. As we were entering the principal street a servant approached

us with a fine Arab horse, and said that the Pacha hoped I would honour him by riding his favourite animal to the quarters prepared for my accommodation. It appeared that the Bey in Angora had telegraphed to the governor of Sivas about me, hence the preparations which had been made.

I dismounted from my own quadruped, and mounted the Pacha's horse. I now found that the stirrup-leathers, even when let out to the last hole, were much too short, I was sitting with my knees nearly up to my chin.

The whole population of Sivas had turned out to welcome me to their city. I should have liked to have made my entry in as dignified a manner as possible. Dignity soon became out of the question. The Arab horse, unaccustomed to sixteen stone on his back, began to kick. To avoid ignominiously coming off, I was compelled to take my feet out of the stirrups, and ride without these appendages to the saddle.

Luckily the rooms prepared for us were not far distant. On arriving in a small square, the officers and Zaptiehs halted before a small, but clean-looking house, which faced the Pacha's residence. On the other sides of the square were the prison and the barracks. The guard turned

out from the last-named building, and presented arms as we dismounted. The officer of the escort, taking my hand, led me up a staircase to the apartment set aside for my accommodation.

Soon after our arrival I was waited upon by an Italian engineer, who was employed at Sivas by the government. He was the only European in the city, which contains 7000 houses; however, there were three American missionaries who had been settled in Sivas for several years past with the object of making proselytes.

The Italian was accompanied by an Armenian who spoke French. The latter gentleman was very indignant with the Pacha, who had shut up the shops belonging to the Christians during the previous week. It appeared that some of the redif soldiers had pillaged a house in the market-place. Several hundred more redifs were expected to arrive at Sivas; there were hardly any regular troops to keep order. The governor had taken the precaution of closing all the shops belonging to Armenians during the stay of the redifs in the town. This was a precautionary measure. It had given great umbrage to the Christians. My visitor loudly denounced the proceeding.

"Are people ever tortured here?" I inquired.

"No," said the engineer; "the law is, or rather the judges are, much too merciful. There has been only one execution during the last three years. The culprit was a soldier; his first wife had been seduced by a neighbour. He put her away and took another, but at the same time said to his neighbour, 'If you seduce this woman I will kill you!' The threat had no effect. The soldier's second wife was treated as the former one had been: he revenged himself by killing the adulterer; for this offence he was hanged."

"Are people ever impaled here?" I inquired, still having the two English priests who wrote some letters to the *Times* about what they said they had seen when travelling on the Danube, in my mind's eye.

The Armenian smiled.

"No, not so bad as that. I believe a robber was impaled eighteen years ago; at all events, there is some tradition to that effect."

Shortly afterwards my visitors left the room.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The prison in Sivas—Christian prisoners—The gaoler—Kurds and Circassians—A few Armenians—False statement made to me by Christians—The old murderer—The firman for his execution—Kept in suspense—Our Governor dislikes shedding blood—Issek Pacha—He may die—His residence—The law in Turkey about murder—Mercenary dealings—Lax justice.

THE following day I walked across the square to the prison. I had not said anything to the authorities in Sivas about my intended visit to this establishment. I wished to see it under its everyday aspect, and at the same time to find out if there were so many Christians prisoners as the Armenians in Yuzgat would have had me believe.

I found the gaoler seated in the doorway, he was smoking a long pipe.

"Can I see the prison?" I asked.

"Certainly, Effendi."

Going before me, he led the way to a lofty

but narrow room. Here there were twenty-seven prisoners, clothed in rags and tatters; each man had his wrist fastened to his instep by a light iron chain. No gaoler slept in this room with the prisoners. They would not have had any difficulty in freeing themselves from their manacles had they tried to do so.

"What do you give them to eat?" I inquired.

"A loaf of bread (about 2 lbs. weight) every day, and some water," was the reply. "However, many of them have friends in the town, and they are supplied with provisions from outside."

"What are the prisoners mostly here for?" I asked.

"For robbery and murder. We have a great many Kurds and Circassians for horse and cattle stealing. Then there are a few Armenians, the latter chiefly for crime connected with money matters."

"How many prisoners are there altogether?" I remarked.

"One hundred and two."

"And how many Christians?"

"Six; all the rest belong to Islam."

As the population of Sivas is fairly divided

between the two sects, it was very flattering for the Armenians that there should be so few of their number amongst the prisoners. But, after what I had been told at Yuzgat, my belief in the truthfulness of their community was very much shaken.

In another part of the gaol there were several prisoners without chains. They were walking about in an enclosed courtyard. One of them, an old man who was very much bowed down by years, appealed to us. Taking my hand he touched it with his forehead, and then besought me to speak to the Pacha for him.

"What is he here for?" I inquired.

"For murder," was the reply; "and a very cold-blooded murder too."

"He is a Circassian," continued the gaoler, "and the firman for his execution arrived at Sivas two years ago."

"Yes," said the old man, in a whining voice, "two years ago! and I have been kept in suspense ever since. It is an awful thing, Effendi—I never know from one hour to another that it may not be my last!"

"Why was he not executed?" I inquired of the official.

"Our Governor dislikes shedding blood," said

the gaoler, "and he has put the firman away in a drawer."

"Yes," interrupted the aged murderer; "Issek Pacha is a kind man, he will not put me to death; but he is very old—he may die! The Governor who will succeed him might find the firman, and order me to be hanged!"

"Well, what do you want me to do?" I asked.

"Only, Effendi, to beseech the Pacha to tear up the firman!" cried the old man in imploring tones. "Let me end my years in the prison, for here every one is kind to me; and let me not be strangled at the end of a rope on the scaffold!"

"Well, I will speak to Issek Pacha," I said; and with difficulty escaping from the murderer, who threw himself on all fours and frantically embraced my legs, I walked to the governor's residence.

He was seated on a sofa at one end of a large hall, and surrounded by attendants with documents awaiting his signature. He at once rose, and motioned to me to sit down by his side. After the customary salutations, I mentioned to him that I had just visited the prison and had seen the old murderer.

"Ah! you have seen him," said the Pacha gravely, at the same time slowly stroking his stomach.

"He is in a great state of mind, I believe, lest I should die before he does, and my successor order the sentence to be put into execution. But he has nothing to fear; I have the firman safe in my drawer, and am trying to arrange the matter with the relatives of the murdered man."

It appears that there is a curious law in Turkey, to the effect that if a man has committed a murder, and the order for his execution has come from Constantinople, the Pacha whose duty it is to have the sentence carried out need not do so, provided that the relations of the murdered person request that the assassin's life may be spared.

This frequently gives rise to mercenary dealings between the assassin and the relatives, for the latter hold his life in their hands. If the murderer is rich, he will often have to give up all his property; and then if the relations pardon him, the law enacts that he must spend fifteen years in gaol. The manner of carrying out this part of the sentence is extremely lax. Should the friends of the prisoner be able to scrape together enough money to satisfy the officials connected with the prison, the murderer will be allowed to escape and remain at large in his native town.

Later in the day two Armenian gentlemen called upon me. Presently one of them re-

marked that Issek Pacha was immensely rich, and that many tales were in circulation about him.

"Yes," said his companion, "there is a story to the effect that one day the Grand Vizier was walking by the side of the Bosphorus with the late Sultan Abdul Aziz. A beautiful yacht, the property of Issek Pacha, happened to be anchored close to the royal palace. 'What a magnificent vessel!' said the Sultan. 'To whom does it belong?' The Grand Vizier," continued the Armenian, "did not much like the Governor of Sivas, and replied, 'It was the property of Issek Pacha, but he has sent it here to be placed at your majesty's disposal.' 'Write and say that I accept it with pleasure,' said the Sultan. The first notification which Issek Pacha had of this transaction was the receipt of an official letter from Constantinople enclosing the Sultan's thanks for the present.

"A subscription had been recently started in the vilayet or province of Sivas, with the object of collecting funds to enable the Government to continue the war. Ten thousand liras were collected. The Pacha sent the money to the Grand Vizier without exactly stating the sources from which it was derived. The minister at once

ordered the receipt of this sum, as coming from Issek Pacha, to be acknowledged in the public journals; he also desired a secretary to write an official letter to the governor to thank him for his large donation, and say in the postscript that when the rest of the people in the province of Sivas had sent in their subscriptions, he was to forward them immediately to Constantinople. Our Pacha did not like this letter," continued my informant. "However, what could he do? he is an enormously rich man, and, though it went very much against the grain, he sent a fresh 10,000 liras to the Porte."

It was clear that the Armenians did not love their Pacha. From what I subsequently heard, their dislike to him originates in the fact that he is not amenable to bribes. That he is not a miser can be easily shown. Misers are not in the habit of expending large sums of money in the construction of public buildings. Issek Pacha at the time of my stay in Sivas was having a large mosque built in the town of Erzingan, at his own expense. It was said that this building would cost him 40,000 Turkish liras.

Three American missionaries called; they had been settled for several years in Anatolia, and had succeeded in making some converts amidst the

Armenians, but they had not in any one instance induced a Mohammedan to change his faith.

I inquired if it were true, as stated at Yuzgat, that Armenian boys and girls had been carried away from their parents, and shut up in Issek Pacha's seraglio.

"No! no," said one of my visitors. "At all events, we have never heard of anything at all authentic as to such proceedings." When I mentioned the subject of impalement, and asked if they had ever known of any Christians who had been impaled by the Pacha's orders, the three missionaries seemed very much surprised at the question, one of them observed that the Turks were by no means a cruel race; but that their system of administering justice was a bad one.

I now learnt that the proprietor of the house in which I was living was a shoemaker. The Pacha had hired from him the apartments which I occupied, and which were generally given to travellers. Mohammed, when he gave me this piece of information, suggested that it would be a good opportunity for me to buy him a pair of boots.

"Such beautiful boots as there are downstairs," he continued, "the Effendi could get both his feet into one of them. They will keep out the cold. If I do not have something over my

slippers I shall be frost-bitten before we reach Kars!"

The proprietor brought the boots for my inspection. He had a very Jewish type of countenance, and at once commenced driving a bargain with Mohammed.

"But you told me downstairs that the boots were 125 piastres, and now you ask 165!" observed the Turkish servant indignantly.

"They are my boots, and not yours!" said the Armenian, "and I shall charge what I like for them!"

It appeared that the difference of opinion between Mohammed and the shoemaker had arisen owing to the Armenian thinking that he would be paid in *caime*, or bank notes, and not in silver. Caime in Sivas had fallen to 165 piastres the lira. It was formerly 125; so by the depreciation of the paper currency the shoemaker would lose 40 piastres on every pair of boots he sold, if purchased from him at the present rate of exchange. Many of the Turks were alarmed at the constant fall in the value of their paper currency. They objected very strongly to being paid any large sums in Turkish bank-notes. According to the son of Crispin, only ten years previous the Government had issued an immense

quantity of caime, and had said that in the following month of March this paper would be accepted in payment of the taxes.

"March arrived," continued the shoemaker, "we took our caime to the tax-collectors. They would not receive it. A vast number of the notes then issued are still in the possession of merchants in this town, and are valueless."

When I was in Yuzgat Mr. Vankovitch had asked me to intercede with Issek Pacha for an Italian lady, the widow of a Pole who had died a few months previously in Sivas. The Pole had been the chief engineer in the district, and at the time of his death was owed about 120*l.* by the Turkish authorities. His widow had applied to the Pacha for this sum, but was refused payment on the ground that she had a son, and that her late husband's father was still living.

"You must write to your husband's Ambassador," said the Pacha, "and ask him to inform us how the law of succession is applied in his country, we will then pay you everything to which you are entitled."

In the meantime an inhabitant took pity upon the Italian lady, and had received her into his harem. Here she was now living, and anxiously awaiting a reply from Constantinople to her

letter. Months passed away, no answer came. The poor woman had exhausted the small resources which she possessed at the time of her husband's death.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Governor calls—A great honour—The Khedive's treasurer—The Pacha's carriage—The Turks and Christians—The Russian Government—The Armenian subjects of the Porte—The seeds of disaffection—General Ignatieff—The treasurer—The Italian lady—Erzingan—The Governor's invitation—The cold in this country—The Pacha nearly frozen to death—His march from Kars to Erzeroum—Deep chasms along the track—The Conference is over—The Missionaries' home—American hospitality—The ladies—A Turkish woman in the streets of New York—A Chinese lad—New Orleans—The Anglo-Indian telegraph—The Franco-German War—The potato plant—The Armenians more deceitful than the Turks—The converts to Protestantism—The Tzar's Government does not tolerate any religion save its own—The superstitions attached to the Greek faith.

I WAS thinking of calling upon the Italian lady when Mohammed, running into my room, informed me that the governor was actually coming in person to call upon me, and that it was a great honour; for some time before this the Khedive's treasurer had passed through Sivas, and Issek

Pacha had not deigned to visit him, but had conversed with the Egyptian from the street.

"See what a great man you are, Effendi!" said the delighted Mohammed. "The equal of a Pacha too! fortunate is my fate that I have been assigned to you as a servant!"

The governor drove up to the door in a vehicle which very much resembled a brewer's dray. It was the only carriage of any sort or kind in Sivas. This fact alone added considerably to the Pacha's importance in that town. He was a corpulent man, and required a great deal of pushing at the hands of his two attendants to make him pass through the doorway of the carriage; two steps enabled the person inside the vehicle to descend to the ground.

Issek Pacha, turning with great caution, walked backwards, his two servants holding his feet and guiding them to the steps below. After resting a few seconds, to recover from this exertion, the governor slowly mounted the staircase which led to my apartment.

He now told me that twenty-five years ago the Turks and Christians got on very well together, but ever since the Crimean war the Russian Government has been actively engaged in tampering with the Armenian subjects of the Porte, and has been

doing its best to sow the seeds of disaffection amongst the younger Armenians, by promising to make them counts and dukes in the event of their rising in arms against the Porte.

"If it were not for Russian intrigues," continued the Pacha, "we Turks should be very good friends with the Christians. But Ignatieff is very clever, he will not let us alone, and does his best to create discord in our ranks."

I mentioned the case of the Italian lady, and asked him if he could not do something for her.

"It is a very difficult question," replied the Pacha; "her husband, the engineer, was a refugee Pole, and had lost his nationality as a Russian subject. Moreover, his father lives in Russia, and may claim that the son's property should be administered according to Muscovite laws. Then there is an infant child; and, besides this, the lady herself is an Italian, and is expecting another baby. We have written to Constantinople for instructions, when they arrive we shall know what proportion of the husband's property is due to the widow."

"What should you advise to be done in the matter?" he inquired.

"My opinion is that you ought to give the lady sufficient money to pay her expenses so far as Con-

stantinople; for there she can speak to her own Ambassador, and arrange the business more easily than it can be done here."

"Not a bad idea," said the Pacha. "I will advance two months of her husband's salary."

"*Gell!* come!" he cried to a crowd of servants who were waiting outside, and whilst one attendant handed him a cigarette, and a second some coffee, the Pacha desired a third to tell his treasurer that he wished to speak to him immediately. This official now arrived.

"I want two months' wages from the sum owing to the late engineer to be brought here at once," said the governor.

"But no order about the distribution of the property has come from Constantinople," replied the treasurer hesitatingly; "if we pay any money to the widow, we shall be held responsible for it ourselves."

"No," I said, "I will be responsible for the amount. If the authorities at Constantinople say that you have done wrong, I will repay you the money."

"Certainly not," said the Pacha; "the responsibility is mine. My orders are to be instantly obeyed," he added.

"Is the money to be paid in caime or silver?" asked the treasurer.

"Silver," was the reply. "When the poor woman's husband died, caime was worth as much as medjidis, but now there is a great difference, she must not be the loser. Run!" he cried.

"On my head be it!" replied the treasurer. In a few minutes he returned with a small sack of silver.

"Will you take it to the lady yourself?" said the governor, handing me the bag. "And when do you leave Sivas?" he added.

"Probably in three days' time."

"Well," continued the governor, "you will pass by Erzingan, where I have some property, and I hope you will stay in my house. Nay, no thanks. It will be doing me an honour, and I have written for rooms to be prepared. I shall send some Zaptiehs with you," he added.

"I do not want any."

"Nay, but you must have some. You will have terrible hard work in crossing the mountains between this and Divriki. There are already two or three feet of snow on the track. In some places you will require men to dig a way before your party. You do not know what the cold is in this country," he continued.

"I was once nearly frozen to death myself, going from Kars to Erzeroum, just about the time of the Crimean war. I had 500 soldiers with me; a snow-storm came on, we lost our way. My men strayed in different directions. I had furs, and was able to resist the cold, but when we counted up my party the next morning, more than half the men were frost-bitten, and several had died during the night. There is another reason why you require several guides," added the governor. "The path over the mountains is covered with snow, and there are deep chasms and fissures alongside the track, some of them are more than a hundred feet deep. The guides carry poles, and will sound the path before your horses, otherwise you will not have much chance of reaching Kars."

"The Conference is over," said the Pacha, as he rose from the divan. "The news has been telegraphed to us from Constantinople."

"What has been the result of it?" I inquired.

"Nothing! What else could you expect? Particularly when Russia, the cause and origin of all our difficulties, was permitted to have a representative at the Conference—and such a representative—for General Ignatieff is a cunning old fox!"

Then shaking hands with me—which I after-

wards learned from Mohammed was a very great honour—the Pacha waddled downstairs, and drove to his official residence.

Later in the day I rode to the missionaries' home, a pleasant little house situated in the outskirts of the town. On their arrival in Sivas they had taken an abode from some Armenians, but the latter demanded such an exorbitant rent for the house in question that the missionaries determined to build one for themselves.

My friends' names were Perry, Hubbard, and Riggs. They received me with that hospitality which an Englishman always receives from Americans, no matter whether they meet him in the States or elsewhere.

Two of these gentlemen had brought their wives with them from America. Several ruddy-faced and pretty children who were playing in the room showed that the climate of Sivas was in no way an unhealthy one.

The ladies liked the place; but when they first came here they had to put up with a great deal of annoyance, owing to the Turkish little boys. The latter, unaccustomed to see women walking about in European costume, and with their faces uncovered, had sometimes followed them in the street

and thrown mud at their dresses. Whenever this occurred, and any elder Turks were present, they had chastised their young compatriots and put an immediate end to the disturbance.

"I dare say," observed one of the missionaries, "that it was a strange sight for the people in Sivas to see our ladies walking about the town. However, if a Turkish woman were put down in the streets of New York, I reckon that she would have a crowd at her heels before long."

This remark reminded me of an episode which had recently occurred in America, and which had found its way into the newspapers. It appeared that a Chinese lad was selling sweets and lollipops in New Orleans, when a burly native, coming up to him, kicked over the tray and the boy's wares. The lad, without a word of remonstrance, picked up his lollipops. The man a second time upset them into the mud. The child looked at his tormentor, and, collecting his sweetmeats, said to him, "You are a Christian and I am a heathen; I should be sorry to change places with you!"

"There are bad people all over the world," remarked one of the missionaries; "the poor ignorant Turks are not nearly so cruel as some people would have us believe."

"No, they are not cruel," observed another

gentleman, "but they are pig-headed—that is their great fault. They will not advance with the times in which they live; if they adopt European inventions, they copy them blindly, and without adapting them to circumstances. Soon after the telegraph was invented, the Turks determined to have special lines, and to use the Turkish alphabet; the man who was employed to arrange the system copied it blindly from our own. Now 'E' and 'I,' the fifth and ninth letters in our alphabet, are those which occur very frequently in an ordinary message; in Europe the telegraph dial is so arranged as to facilitate the transmission of the letters most often employed. The Turk, when he came to 'I,' and found it was the ninth letter in our alphabet, placed the ninth in his own on the same footing, whereas that letter is, comparatively speaking, but seldom used."

"A few years ago," observed one of the missionaries, "there was an Englishman here connected with the Anglo-Indian Telegraph. We were then as well supplied with information as the people in London or New York. It was the time of the French war, and all the news was sent daily from England to Hindostan. Our friend used to tap the wire, and send us a little budget of infor-

mation every morning; but now he has gone, and all that we hear is several weeks or months old."

"There was actually a great deal of difficulty in introducing the potato plant," remarked another gentleman; "this will give you an idea of the nature of the people with whom we have to deal. Some foreigners brought over the seeds and planted them. They came up very well; the soil is admirably suited for their growth. But the natives would not eat the potatoes. It was not until the military authorities, who were short of provisions, supplied them to the soldiers in lieu of other edibles that the soldiers would partake of this vegetable. They soon acquired a taste for it, and potato culture is gradually spreading throughout the district."

"I tell you what it is," said another missionary, "the Turks about here are just the inside-outsidest and the outside-insidest, the bottom-side-upwardest and the top-side-downwardest, the back-side-forwardest and the forward-side-backwardest people I have ever seen. Why, they call a compass, which points to the north, 'Quebleh,' south, just for the sake of contradiction, and they have to change their watches every twenty-four hours, because they count their time from after sunset, instead of reckoning up the day like Christians."

The peculiarity of this gentleman's expressions rather struck me at the time. It was clear that he had not formed a favourable opinion of the Sultan's Mohammedan subjects; but when I changed the conversation to the Armenians, I found that the company looked upon them as being quite as ignorant as the Turks, and much more deceitful.

The good missionaries found the conversion of these superstitious and ignorant Christians of the East a very difficult and uphill task. Indeed I subsequently heard from some Armenian Roman Catholics, who might have been prejudiced in making the statement, that most of the converts to Protestantism were from amongst the Armenian shop-keepers who supplied the mission with goods.

"Supposing the Russians were to conquer Anatolia, what would be the position of the Protestant mission?" I inquired of my hosts.

"We should be immediately turned out of the country to make way for the Russian priests," was the answer. "The Tzar's Government does not tolerate any religion save its own."

This remark struck me, coming, as it did, not from an English Protestant, but from an

American, and from an inhabitant of that country which, in spite of its Republican institutions, has always been thought to have a great sympathy with Russia.

So the Government of this last-mentioned Empire would not brook any foreign mission in its territory, and the Emperor would not be likely to allow American missionaries to impart to the Russian idolaters a knowledge of the Protestant faith.

Protestantism implies freedom of thought. The right of investigation would be very displeasing to a despotic set of rulers. The superstitions and debased form of worship attached to the Greek religion have no chance of being replaced by our pure Protestant faith, until such time as the autocratic system of government which prevails throughout Russia is terminated by a revolution.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

An Armenian Monastery—A large garden—Farms belonging to the Monks—The Bishop—A fast day—The Turkish finance—The Armenian merchants in Sivas—The telegraph employed by them—The rise and fall in *caime*—The breath of scandal—A former Governor of Sivas—A suspicious case—His Eminence cannot marry—Are Protestant Bishops allowed to marry?—The Chapels belonging to the Monastery—A curious altar—A strange tradition—The Martyrs of Sivas—A picture of one of the Kings of Armenia—The Kings and the Church—Things are very different now—Privileges of the Monks—The Russian war with Persia—An Armenian General—Hassan, Khan of Persia—Sugar—How to make a large fortune.

THE following day I rode to an Armenian monastery, which is known by the name of the Monastery of Nishan or of the Cross. It stands on a rising slope, about two miles from Sivas. Its Gothic towers, more than 500 years old, look down upon the town and neighbouring villages, and can be seen for many miles around.

A large garden, over thirty acres in extent,

enclosed by a high wall made of dried clay, supplies the monks with fruit and vegetables. It bounds the monastery upon one side; on the other there are several farms, which furnish cattle, sheep, and such other live stock as may be required.

A long low passage with damp walls led the way, with many a winding turn, to the apartment which had been reserved for my use.

Here I found the bishop and several other priests belonging to the community. The ceiling of the room was of handsomely-carved oak, and divans, as in the Turkish houses, supplied the place of chairs. Some Armenian merchants now arrived, and shortly afterwards dinner was announced.

It was a fast day. The bishop himself could not partake of the dishes. However, he gave permission to the other guests to break the fast, and a turkey stuffed with apples—the *pièce de résistance*—was nothing to the hungry visitors; the dinner being in the Turkish style, made up of a series of surprises to our stomachs.

According to one of the Armenians, the Turkish finance was in an utterly hopeless condition.

"Our Government," he remarked, "first said

that it would only issue paper money to the amount of 3,000,000 liras, and we have caime to the value of 11,000,000 liras in circulation!"

"Yes," said another merchant, "the lira is now at 160 piastres, but if there is a war it will rise to 500."

"The Government will be the loser in the long run," he continued, "every one is speculating for the fall, and we are buying up all the gold we can."

I now learnt that the Armenian merchants in Sivas employed the telegraph very freely in their monetary speculations. The inhabitants in general only knew of the rise or fall in the value of their paper money by the post, which arrived once every fortnight. The value of caime in proportion to gold was reckoned according to the date of the post's delivery. But, as the Turkish bank-notes were becoming more and more depreciated every day, the Armenian merchants who employed the telegraph were able to make large sums by buying up all the gold in the district, and pocketing the difference between the actual exchange and that which passed current at Sivas.

The walls of the monastery were not thick enough to keep the breath of scandal from

reaching the abode of the recluses. I was told of a former governor of Sivas, who had been extremely popular throughout the district, and who in forty days had actually established order in the town and neighbourhood. It appeared that this Pacha was a very good-looking man. One day, when he was at Constantinople, a sister of the late Sultan Abdul Aziz chanced to see him. She wished to marry the Adonis; "but unfortunately," added my Armenian informant, "he was in love with his own wife, a pretty woman. He declined the Sultan's offer to take his sister, who was not good-looking, as chief lady in the harem. Soon afterwards the Pacha died at Smyrna under very suspicious circumstances. It is generally supposed that he was poisoned."

"His Eminence is freed from all such dangers," whispered another of the guests, as he called my attention by a nudge with his elbow.

"How so?" I asked.

"Why, he cannot marry. Our bishops are not allowed this indulgence. Should a priest take unto himself a wife, he can never become a bishop."

"How does your system answer?" I inquired.

"Answer! very badly. They are not allowed

to have wives of their own; but they look after the welfare of the ladies in their congregation. Are your Protestant bishops allowed to marry?"

"Yes."

"Well, it would be a good thing for the married people in Armenia, if our bishops had the same permission."

I now went to see the chapels belonging to the monastery.

An altar in one of them was profusely decorated with gold and other ornaments. It was erected to the memory of the four martyrs of Sivas who were torn to pieces by the Pagans about 1500 years ago. It is said that our Saviour shortly afterwards appeared to the inhabitants of the town in the form of a bird, and alighted upon a large stone near the place where the four Christians had been murdered. The stone was subsequently taken to the monastery, and this altar had been erected upon it. In another chapel, there was a picture of one of the kings of Armenia in the act of being consecrated by an archbishop of Sivas. The holy father who called my attention to this picture pointed to the suppliant form of the king, who was kneeling before a priest, and to a monk who was writing the date of the coronation on

a scroll of parchment, and looking down upon the sovereign.

"Things are very different to what they were then," remarked the priest. "In those days even kings had to obey the holy Church. They do not think anything of us now," he added, with a sigh; "instead of giving presents to the Church, they take away from it the few privileges and the little wealth it has left."

"Have you any privileges belonging to your order?" I asked.

"Only one; we have not to pay any duty upon salt, and I suppose that even this slight exemption from taxation will be taken away from us ere long."

A throne belonging to a former king of Armenia was next produced. It was made of ebony, and in form much resembled a shut-up garden-chair, but one of gigantic dimensions. The sovereign for whom this throne had been made, died several hundred years ago at Sivas. The worthy fathers differed a few hundred years as to the date of the monarch's decease, and so it is impossible for me to give it. His bones were taken to Van, and interred there; however, his sons reigned for many years afterwards, and held their court at Sivas.

"Our nation has had a great many reverses," said the bishop; "but who knows what is in store for us?"

"We do not want any Russian rulers!" said an old Armenian merchant. "When I was a child," he continued, "the Russians made war upon the Persians. A general, second in command of the Russian forces, was an Armenian. The head of our Church helped the Russians, and 25,000 Armenians were levied to aid them in the war against the Shah. The Persian army was annihilated; twenty-five cities were destroyed; the invading forces advanced towards Teheran. The Shah then made a treaty with Russia."

"What has that got to do with your dislike of the Russians?" I inquired.

"Listen!" said the old man. "After the war was over, the Russian chief was alarmed lest the Armenian general, who was a very skilful officer, might make himself King of Armenia. He accused him of treason, had his eyes taken out, and sent him a prisoner to Russia."[1]

"The Russians would not have been pleased if

[1] I wrote this anecdote down at the time. It is given precisely as the Armenian narrated the story. I have not been able to find a corroboration of the statement in any historical document. Very little is known of what took place during this war.

we had been made independent at that time," said a priest. "They have always looked upon us as a certain inheritance, all they want to do is to take our territory without having to fight for it."

"We revenged ourselves upon Hassan, Khan of Persia, who had defiled one of our churches near Ararat," remarked the old merchant. "He was taken prisoner and transported to the church which he had desecrated. He was afterwards tied face to face with a dog, and given the same food as that animal. The Persian soon died of shame or starvation."

There is but little export trade from Sivas. Tobacco is the staple produce of the country. All the articles imported are very dear, owing to the expense of transport from Samsoun, the roads between Sivas and that port being very bad.

Sugar, I was informed, costs eighteenpence a pound. If an enterprising inhabitant were to start a manufactory of this article of consumption, he would speedily make an immense fortune. Beetroot and a peculiar sort of sweet carrot abound throughout the district. The first-mentioned vegetable can be bought for eight shillings a ton. It might be grown for very much less. Any amount of water power could be brought

from the neighbouring mountains to bear upon machinery. Coal is also to be found in the neighbourhood. This part of Anatolia is supplied with sugar from Constantinople. If it were manufactured on the spot, the profit would be very great, for the cost of carriage would be saved; in all probability it would utterly supplant the Constantinople sugar, and soon find a market throughout the whole of Asia Minor.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The principal mosque—An ostrich egg—Curious custom—The dancing dervishes—A regiment of cavalry leaves Sivas—The arms of the men—Appearance of the horses—A short route to Erzeroum—Dudusa—The Kizil Ermak—Scenery—Glass replaced by alabaster—A raid on an Armenian village—The robbers caught—Women said to have been outraged—Kotnu—An accident—The Zaptiehs out of temper—Mohammed's appetite—A comparison between Mohammed and Osman.

On leaving the monastery, we rode to the principal mosque of the town. I was struck by seeing a large ostrich egg suspended from the ceiling by a silver chain. On my asking the Turk who showed me over the building, why this egg was hung there, he replied,—

"Effendi, the ostrich always looks at the eggs which she lays; if one of them is bad, she breaks it. This egg is suspended here as a warning to men that, if they are bad, God will break them in the same way as the ostrich does her eggs."

Mohammed met me as I was returning to my house. He was very much excited.

"What is the matter?" I inquired.

"Effendi, a regiment is about to march to Erzeroum. It will be a grand sight. The Pacha will accompany it out of the town. The dancing dervishes will go before the band. Other dervishes will be there with sharp knives; they will cut themselves, but the blood will not flow! It will be a miracle! And all this we can see from the Effendi's window!"

"Happy are you, O Mohammed, to be able to see such wonderful sights without paying for them," I remarked; then, giving him my horse, I went upstairs to my room.

An immense crowd had gathered in the square; the part facing the barracks was thronged by hundreds of idlers who were eagerly pressing against the gates. Presently they were thrown wide open. The governor, in his dray-like carriage, issued from the portals. He was accompanied by the colonel of the regiment, who was mounted on a superb grey, and rode by the side of the Pacha's vehicle.

Next came six dancing dervishes clad in sackcloth, and with long cowls over their green turbans. They in their turn were followed by

about twenty men—some carrying what appeared to be bill-hooks—others, maces with leaden balls attached to them by chains, and bright steel skewers.

"This is delightful!" said Mohammed, who, by way of seeing better, had climbed on to the top of the divan, torn away the piece of paper which supplied the place of a pane of glass, and, having thrust his head and shoulders through the aperture, was staring with his mouth wide open at the procession.

"Please God they will soon begin to cut themselves!"

However, he was doomed to disappointment; the dervishes had already cut themselves in the barrack-yard, and were not inclined to repeat the performance.

On they went in serried ranks, followed by the troopers, all of whom were excellently mounted on horses averaging about fifteen hands, and which looked in capital condition. The men were armed with American revolvers and repeating-rifles, whilst a short curved scimitar hung by each man's side.

"How long will it be before they reach Erzeroum?" I inquired of Mohammed.

"About a month," was the answer; "but they

are going by a short route by Kara Hissar, and we by Divriki, Arabkir, and Egin, which will be a long way round. We shall arrive first at our destination, as the regiment will not march more than sixteen miles a day."

The Pacha ordered his coachman to draw up the carriage on one side of the road; the dervishes raised a mournful yell. The regiment, passing onward, was lost to view behind an avenue of poplars.

The following morning I started at daybreak in the direction of Dudusa, a village about five hours from Sivas. For some distance we marched alongside the left bank of the Kizil Ermak. The track was very heavy. The baggage-horses had great difficulty in making a way through the mud. Presently we came upon some firm soil. The scenery changed from a flat expanse of ploughland to a winding chain of rugged heights. Chain succeeded chain. Snowy crests were piled up in rear of each other like the billows of the deep. Our path led round these mountain peaks. From time to time we caught a glimpse of the Kizil Ermak, which, white as silver, flowed through the vale at our feet. Nature's walls on all sides of us were of every colour; at every moment, red, blue, and grey sandstone met our gaze.

We round a neighbouring crag; a vast rock of the purest marble lies before our party. Huge blocks strew the borders of the path; they sparkle beneath the sky, and rival in their Parian whiteness the snowy heights overhead. On the summit of an adjacent hill is the monastery of Dudusa, and at its foot the village of the same name, made up of straggling houses, built at long intervals apart—some of mud and marble; others—where the inhabitants had been too idle to transport the blocks from the adjacent rock—of dried clay; and a few of the abodes of the better-to-do farmers actually boasting glass windows! In other houses the panes were replaced by paper or pieces of some transparent alabaster, which is found in large quantities in the neighbourhood.

Dudusa is an Armenian village. I now learnt that Issek Pacha was very popular amongst the villagers. I must say that I was a little surprised at this, after the way the Armenians in Sivas had abused their governor. Two months previous, some Turks, from a neighbouring hamlet, had made a raid on the flocks belonging to the inhabitants of Dudusa, and had carried off fifty sheep. Information of the robbery was given to the Pacha, he at once sent out a party of soldiers.

The robbers had been arrested. They were expiating their offence in prison.

I had heard at Sivas that a redif battalion which had lately marched to Erzeroum had outraged some women near Dudusa. I took the opportunity to inquire if the story were true. Like many other statements which had been made to me by the so-called Christians in Anatolia, it turned out to be a fiction. The redif soldiers had passed that way. The only thing which could be said against them was that they had not paid for the bread with which they had been supplied, as the military authorities had not given them any money. There were no officers with the troops, but the men had given the name of their regiment. On application to head-quarters, the amount due would be transmitted to the villagers.

I did not stay long at Dudusa, but, after lunching at the priest's house, continued the march towards Kotnu, another village about twenty-seven miles, or about nine hours from the capital of the province.

It was dusk long ere we reached our halting-place. In passing over a narrow wooden bridge, one of my horses put his foot down a hole between the planks, and nearly broke his leg. Misfortunes never come singly. A moment later, the poor brute

strayed a few yards from the track. He was at once bogged in the treacherous soil. Everything had to be unstrapped from the saddle, a rope was attached to his surcingle, and then, by means of the other horses, he was dragged from the slimy trammels. It was hard work loading him again.

The thermometer had fallen to considerably below zero. The wind howled and blew the snowy flakes in our faces. The horses would not stand still. Our matches were wet through. We could not light them. Under such circumstances we had to arrange the baggage.

The Zaptiehs who had been sent to act as guides would not help; they sat still, cursing their destiny which had made them accompany a mad giaour like myself, who had chosen to travel from Scutari to Kars all the way by land, instead of going the greater part of the distance by sea, like a sensible true believer. I have but little doubt that the same train of thought was passing through Mohammed's and Radford's mind. However, the latter never flinched, and Mohammed had evidently won his friendship, for, on my asking my English servant how he liked his new companion, he replied, "Sir, he is worth three of Osman at any time, save praying-times, and then there is

not a pin to choose between them. They must be awful sinners, these Mohammedans, if they require five prayers a day to settle the account with their consciences. Mohammed ain't that artful as Osman was. He don't choose the moment when there is work to be done, to set to work at his victuals, or to flop down on his knees to say his prayers. Mohammed has his pray all to himself afterwards, and then it don't so much signify!"

"What! Has not Mohammed so good an appetite as Osman?"

"No, sir, Mohammed has more of a Christian's appetite; he is satisfied with what I put before him, he don't go prigging out of the tin like that there other Turk. Why, I watched Osman one day eating a chicken which I had kept back for your supper! A few days before, I had missed one out of the pot, and had taxed him with it; he then said, '*keupek*,' dog, as if a dog would go and lift up the lid of the tin! I used to call Osman 'keupek' afterwards, and he did not seem to like it. The other Turks, when they want to give it a fellow, tell him that he is the grandson of a dog; but I called Osman the original animal—dirty hound that he was too—quite spoiled my coat, that he did!"

And my servant, lighting a short wooden pipe, the wonder of the Turks, smoked furiously—the rapidity of his puffs probably denoting an extreme dislike to his late fellow-servant.

CHAPTER XXX.

Snow—The path covered by it—The scenery—Upset in a snow-drift—Nearly down a chasm—Probing the ground—A consultation—Teaching my followers manners—May he die of the plague—A baggage-horse knocked up—Yarbasan—A dirty village—The farmer committing himself to Providence—Visiting his friends—The Zaptiehs—Their remarks—The giaour threatened to beat us—The Inglis giaour is different to the Armenian giaour.

Snow fell heavily during the night. The next morning our path was covered to a depth of quite two feet. In the valley it was as much as our horses could do to force a passage onward; but, as we ascended a mountain path, the snow, though deep, was in a frozen state, and afforded a firm foothold.

The scenery was very picturesque as we gradually climbed the steep. The bushes and pine-trees which studded the mountain's sides were wreathed in flossy snow; crags of all shapes and colours glinted out above the pale white carpet.

A thick veil of azure clouds hung on the peaks of the distant hills; then, gradually dispersed by the rising sun, it broke up into a hundred different forms, and, ascending higher in the sky, opened out other mountains to our vision. Layer upon layer of seemingly ever-ascending ranges barred the way in front. They sparkled beneath the rays of the golden orb. They flashed and glittered like the billows of the mighty deep. My eyeballs ached and felt as if they would burst beneath the glare. The village at our feet disappeared in the distance; shrubs and such-like traces of vegetation were now no longer to be seen. We had arrived in the midst of what seemed to be a vast white ocean. The intensity of the light created a kind of mirage along the surface. The various crests and ranges seemed to rise and fall. They became more wave-like than before. Not a living thing was in sight save ourselves. Ever and anon a boom, as of thunder, announced the fall of an avalanche.

The cry of "Look out!" from a Zaptieh in rear of our party awoke me from the contemplation of Nature's marvellous scene. A second later, and I found myself on the broad of my back in a snow-drift; the animal which I had been riding was pawing the air with his fore-legs, like

a spaniel the first time he is thrown into the water; before any one could reach my horse's head, over he fell—the soft substance fortunately saving my body from the effects of the collision. It appeared that I had strayed half a yard or so from the track, hence this disaster. The Zaptieh in front of our party dismounted, taking a wand, six feet in length, from his saddle-bow, he began to advance with great caution, and to probe the ground before him at every step he took.

"There are deep holes," said Mohammed, wading through the snow to my assistance. "If we fall down one of them we shall remain there, and in the summer the eagles will pick our bones. It will be better for all of us to walk and lead the horses," he continued. "Even then we shall have great difficulty in effecting a passage. The chief Zaptieh has been saying that it would be better if we were to return to Kotnu and try to cross the mountains to-morrow."

The snow had recommenced falling; it was difficult to see what lay before us. However, we had accomplished more than half of the day's march. In all probability the path would soon become more difficult. I determined at all hazards to push on, and the more particularly as

I had no time to waste, owing to my limited leave of absence. Forward we waded through the gradually-rising drifts. Each man followed his neighbour in Indian file; presently the leading Zaptieh who was engaged in sounding the path before him, buried the six-feet wand in the snow; he thrust his elbow down after the stick; there was still no bottom. We were off the track. A false step might at any moment send us down the chasm. A consultation took place between the Zaptiehs, the head man urging forcibly upon our party the necessity of returning. But when we faced the other way, the wind cut against our eyes with great violence. The particles of snow were so blinding that it was clearly much more dangerous to return than to proceed.

"It is our fate!" remarked the chief Zaptieh to the comrade by his side.

"Destruction seize the giaour who may be the cause of all our deaths!" said another.

"Let him die of the plague!" added a third.

This rather strong language was uttered in a loud tone, and as if the speakers did not care whether their observations met my ear or not.

"I tell you what it is!" I cried rather sternly to my unruly followers, and at the same time drawing my revolver; "I cannot reach you with

my whip; but if you make any more insulting remarks, I shall send a bullet in your direction to teach you manners!"

"For the sake of heaven be quiet!" cried Mohammed to the Zaptiehs—for he, being directly in the line of fire, did not wish to expose himself as a shield to the delinquents.

"There will be no baksheesh unless you are as docile as horses," continued my Turkish servant.

This last remark, combined with my threat—which, it is needless to say, I had no intention to put into execution—brought the guides to their senses. Presently the stick of the leading Zaptieh struck against the track, and, after wading through the snow for some three hours more, we descended the side of the mountain. The snow disappeared as we reached the vale below, and deep mud, reaching above our knees, covered the track before us. It was terrible hard work for the baggage-horses. One of them, stumbling, fell prostrate in the mire. No amount of pressure would induce him to get up; so, taking off his pack-saddle and dividing the baggage as best we could—placing some on the saddle-horses and carrying the rest ourselves—we struggled on to a glimmering light which marked our quarters for the night.

The village of Yarbasan was reached. Sending back some of the villagers for the abandoned animal, I prepared to make myself as comfortable as the circumstances would allow.

In the meantime Radford and Mohammed were busily engaged in unloading the other baggage-horse. The pack-saddle was too broad to pass through the narrow gateway; all the luggage had to be unstrapped in the street—such a street as it was too! Imagine a farm-yard of the dirtiest description, and without any straw to absorb the filthy refuse; but even this does not convey to my own mind the hideous state of the road through Yarbasan. The inhabitants possessed many cattle, which were each evening driven into the village, so as to be out of the way of wolves. It had never occurred to the mind of the oldest villager to remove the deposits of their cows and oxen. If a farmer wished to pay a visit to a neighbour across the way, he simply tucked up his dressing-gown under his arm-pits, took off his slippers, broad trousers, and stockings, then, committing himself to Providence, he would wade through the dirt to his friend's house.

"Why do you not clean the street?" I inquired of my host, an old Turk, who, having

just come in from the country, was rubbing his legs with some straw before the fire.

"The mud will dry up in the summer months," replied the man; "why trouble our heads about it now?"

The inside of the dwelling was not so clean as an average pig-sty. Horses, oxen, cows, and sheep were stowed away in the same room as ourselves. The Zaptiehs had squatted down in one corner with the host, Radford and Mohammed lay stretched out in the middle of the floor.

In a few minutes a woman arrived from some other house in the neighbourhood. She was clad in a long strip of cloth, which enveloped the upper part of her body; her legs and feet were covered with mud. Putting down a large wooden tray, on which were several thin cakes of half-cooked paste, and a basinful of oily soup, she retired. The proprietor of the house, after offering the dishes to me, returned to the Zaptiehs. In the meantime, closing my eyes, I tried to doze off to sleep. Presently the gendarmes thought that I was in the land of Somnus, and my attention was aroused by the familiar term of "giaour."

"Only think of our being ordered to accompany an infidel to Divriki in the winter!" observed the chief of the party.

"Yes, and for him to threaten to whip us!" said the other.

"He would have done it too," said Mohammed, joining in the conversation. "My Effendi is not like the Christians about here. He is an Inglis!"

"So the Inglis giaours are different to the Armenian giaours?" observed the Zaptieh.

"Very different: the Armenians talk, but the Inglis strike. Hush! hush! we shall awake him!" —and the conversation gradually died away in a whisper.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The river Dumrudja—How to cross the river?—A waterfall in the neighbourhood—Thanksgivings—Crossing the mountain—A house of refuge—Divriki—Its appearance—The number of houses—The river Tchalt Tchai—The Captain—His evolutions—Lor! what a cropper—Serve him right, sir—A Astley's performance—My host—Mines in the neighbourhood—People with brains—Houses formerly built of hewn stone—Cause of the decline of the Turkish power—Wives chosen for their looks—How to breed a good foal—A Turk's opinion of European women—They uncover their faces—What ridiculous creatures they must be—The Citadel—The Persians—The Greek fire—The view of Divriki—Sport—A rifle used as a shot gun—One of your best shots—The Kurds—Gunpowder—It is manufactured by the Kurds—Powder sent from Constantinople—Cost to the Government of cartridges—The Pacha of Sivas—His astrologer—Christians who are usurers—Turkish families ruined.

THE baggage-horse was very little the worse for his long march of ten hours on the previous day. Yarbasan was not a lively place to stop at, I determined to push on to Divriki.

We passed a range of hills—red-coloured stones lying in profusion along the track—and, descending a deep incline, arrived on the banks of the river Dumrudja (Kumer Su), a rapid stream, here about fifty yards wide. A quantity of wood was floating on the waters. This had been cut in the pine-forests higher up the channel, and afterwards been tossed into the river to find its way to Divriki. There was no bridge over the stream, the water being more than four feet deep. A consultation took place amongst the Zaptiehs.

"What are they talking about?" I inquired of Mohammed.

"Effendi, they say that if any one of our horses were to stumble, it would be a bad thing for the rider. There is a waterfall a few hundred yards down the stream."

The large pieces of timber which were whirling round and round in the middle of the river were also a source of anxiety, for should any of these huge beams strike a horse, the animal would have been swept off his legs for a certainty. After a minute or two spent in consideration, the Zaptiehs determined to cross the river, every horseman riding abreast of his companion. The stream would then press against the outside horse; he, however, would be supported by the one alongside

him; each animal, in turn, being assisted by the other quadrupeds of the party.

It was as much as our horses could do to reach the opposite bank. After several thanksgivings to the all-merciful Allah, we once more began to climb into the clouds. A dense mist prevailed. Presently almost everything was hidden from our view. The snow became deeper and more binding; at last the pack-horses came to a standstill. Unloading the baggage-animals, we distributed the luggage amidst the saddle-horses, and, wading onward, continued our march through the snow. This in some places was nearly breast high.

On the summit of the mountain stood a little house built of rocks, which were loosely piled the one upon the other; and, resting here for a minute or so to recover our breath, I was informed that it had been erected by a charitable Turk in Divriki, as a shelter for benighted travellers.

"Blessings on his head!" said the Zaptieh who gave me the information. "This shelter has saved several lives already. If we had arrived here two hours later, it might have been the means of saving our own. The wind is rising," he continued, "and the sooner we reach Divriki the better."

Presently the little town appears in sight; a

thin skirt of poplar-trees encircles it as in a frame. An old ruined citadel, perched up on a seemingly inaccessible rock, faces us from the opposite side of Divriki. A tower on a still higher peak, but communicating by a hidden path with the citadel, serves as a place of refuge for the garrison, should the first-mentioned stronghold ever be taken by assault. A rapid stream—the Tchalt Tchai—runs below the citadel. The town is said to contain about 3400 houses, of which 3000 belong to Turks, and the remainder to Armenians.

Behind the houses and in the distance were fresh layers of snow-covered mountains: the valley in which the town lies had not felt the onslaught of winter; it was still covered with deep mud.

One of the Zaptiehs galloped forward with a letter to the governor from the Pacha at Sivas. Presently the official rode out to meet me. He was accompanied by an escort of gendarmes under the command of a captain. The latter, who was mounted upon a spirited little Arab, caracoled his steed to and fro—now bending over the saddle and trying to touch the ground with his hand—then going through all the motions of throwing the Djerrid—evidently wishing to astonish the weak nerves of the newly-arrived giaours.

"Lor! what a cropper!"

This remark from my English servant disturbed me in a conversation with the governor. On looking round, I saw the captain rolling in the mud. His saddle had turned—hence the fall.

"Serve him right, sir!" remarked Radford, catching my eye. "He was a spurring his horse that cruel; now pulling him up short on his withers, and then loosing him off like an express train. He was trying to show us how he could touch the ground. I believe, sir, the fellow thinks that we know nothing about riding, and that is why he wanted to do a Astley's performance out here in Hasia!"

The Caimacan led the way to a large house, belonging to a Turkish gentleman, a personal friend of the Pacha of Sivas. My host received me very courteously. He was under the impression that I had come to Divriki on some business connected with mines, and seemed surprised when he was informed that nothing but a wish to see the country had induced me to ride through Anatolia.

"There are mines in the neighbourhood," said the Turk, "and, according to tradition, some very rich ones. They were worked several hundred years ago—that is, when people lived who had

brains—but now, alas! every man's head is like a blown-out calf's skin. The people do not know how to get at the treasures which lie hid beneath the ground, and, even if they did, would be too idle to do so."

I observed that, judging from the ruins about Divriki, all the houses must formerly have been built of hewn stone.

"Yes," said my host sorrowfully, "our ancestors were wise men. They lived in stone houses, we are satisfied with buildings made of dried mud. What do you build your houses of in England?" he inquired.

"Of bricks made of clay burnt in a fire."

"Yes, said the Turk, "you English have advanced. You know more than your grandfathers. Why have we not done the same?"

"Probably because you keep your women shut up in a harem, and do not educate them," I replied. "Turkish mothers are very ignorant, and, consequently, cannot instruct their children. The result is that your sons are only half educated. Besides this, you choose your wives—at least I am told so—for their looks, and without any regard to their attainments."

"The Inglis is quite right," said an old Turk, a friend of my host. "If I want to breed a good

foal, I am as particular about the mare as the sire. He means that we leave the mares out of the question, and then complain that our stock is not so good as that of other nations."

"But hundreds of years ago our women knew quite as much as the Frank women," observed my host.

"Yes," replied his companion, "and then we could hold our own against the Franks. But the Frank women have been educated since those times; the Effendi thinks that we ought to educate our wives in the same way."

"It would be difficult to do so," said the Turk coldly. "Their women uncover their faces; I have heard that some of them declare that they are the equals of their husbands. What ridiculous creatures they must be," he continued, "not at once to accept that inferior position which Allah in His wisdom has awarded to them!"

The following day I walked to the citadel, accompanied by my host. The building had been erected 600 years ago, as a defence against the Persians, who at that time frequently made encroachments into this part of Turkey. The solid masonry, which in many places had been allowed to go to ruin, showed that the walls had been originally built with great care. Two thousand

men could have been quartered in the citadel, which now, uninhabited save by dogs and lizards, is rapidly succumbing to the elements. Convenient embrasures had been left on that side of the rampart which was easiest to assault; through them the defenders could pour down the celebrated Greek fire so much used in the middle ages.

The river, which ran below the citadel, separated us from the tower which was used as a final place of retreat should the citadel be stormed. On my asking how the garrison could cross the water, there being no bridge in the vicinity, I was informed that a subterranean passage led beneath the stream to the other bank, and, then entering the side of the rock, a winding staircase gave access to the tower. The defenders were thus able to retreat from the citadel without their movements being seen by the enemy.

It was a glorious afternoon. The view of Divriki, of its numerous minarets and domes, lying as it were in miniature below us, was very lovely. Lofty mountains, in winter garb, surrounded the suburbs on every side; and the silvery river, threading its way through the more distant quarters of the town, bubbled and splashed against the rocks and boulders. The murmur

of the waters was blended with the hum of the population. The cries of the herdsmen mingled ever and anon with the report of a fire-arm in the distance.

"Is there much game in the neighbourhood?" I inquired of my companion, who, leaning against one of the battlements in the tower, was straining his eyes in the direction of the shot.

"No. A few wild goats are sometimes to be seen on the rocks. The sportsman, whoever he is, has probably managed to come upon some of them unawares. I have a beautiful gun," he continued; "I will show it you afterwards."

"Is it for partridges or for big game?" I asked.

"For big game. It is rifled," he replied, "but I often load it with shot, and shoot at partridges, that is when they are all huddled together on the ground. Do you shoot much in your country with ball?"

"Yes; there is a great meeting once a year near London. All the best marksmen attend, and the Queen gives a prize to the best shot."

"Does she give many paras?"

"A great many—several hundred liras."

"Now could one of your best shots hit that cow?" pointing to an animal about 400 yards distant.

"Yes."

"What a marvel!" said the Turk. "Even the Kurds could not do that, and they shoot very well. They manufacture their own powder," he continued, "and very good powder it is too. The powder sold by the permission of our Government is very bad and dear; besides that, a man is only permitted to purchase a very small quantity at a time. There is plenty of sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal in the mountains, and the Kurds supply themselves."

I afterwards learnt that all the powder which is furnished to the troops in Asia Minor is sent from Constantinople. There is no gunpowder manufactory in this part of Asia Minor. It is a great pity that the Turks have not long ago started an arsenal in the neighbourhood of Erzingan, which could have supplied the troops on the Turko-Russian frontier with cartridges and small-arms. As it is, every cartridge served out to a soldier before Kars costs the Government fifty per cent in addition to its original cost, owing to the difficulties of transport.

"The Pacha at Sivas wrote to me to make your stay at Divriki as pleasant as I could," presently remarked my companion.

"How did you like him?" observed an Armenian who now joined us.

"Very much."

"He is civil to all Europeans," continued the Armenian. Probably he took a fancy to you because his astrologer had worked out your horoscope, and had reported favourably upon it."

"You do not mean to say that the Pacha believes in such things?" I observed.

"Yes; he never makes a journey without first of all consulting his astrologer."

There was no very active trade in Divriki. The Armenians supplied the people of the town with the few goods which they might require at exorbitant prices.

In addition to this, most of the Christians were usurers. Any Mohammedan who chanced to require a loan had to pay his Armenian fellow-citizen a very high rate of interest. However, in this respect, Divriki is not an exception to the towns in Anatolia, and in almost every district which I visited I found that the leading Christians in the community had made their money by usurious dealings. In some instances, old Turkish families had been entirely ruined, their descendants were lying in gaol at the suit of Armenian money-lenders.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Usury laws in Turkey—An Armenian in prison for debt—The Caimacan—The Turkish creditor—Hanistan Ereek's father—A Government cannot be imprisoned for debt—The redif soldiers—Their unwillingness to serve—The Armenians not to be trusted—Yanoot—A picture of desolation—A Jordan road—Turkish soldiers do not grumble—Arabkir—A silk-merchant—My host—His library—Pretty covers—A Russian servant—He was taken prisoner during the Crimean war.

I WAS now to learn that the usury laws in Turkey are also used against the Christians. On returning to my house, a servant informed me that an Armenian was downstairs, and wished to see me.

He had been in Paris, and could speak a little French. This he so interlarded with Turkish that it was rather difficult to follow him. The man's name was Hanistan Ereek. At length I discovered that, twelve years ago, his father had borrowed 300 piastres from a Turk. Soon afterwards the father died, and the son, leaving Divriki without paying the debt, had gone to

Europe. On his return, the creditor had him arrested for the sum of 6000 piastres. This Hanistan Ereek refused to pay; he had been imprisoned for three months in consequence.

The Caimacan was in the room at the time the man made his complaint.

"It seems a hard case," I remarked.

"It is our law," was the reply; "if he had been a Turk, the same thing would have happened."

"No, it would not have happened! 300 piastres could never have amounted to 6000 piastres!" cried the Armenian indignantly.

It appeared that the case was one of hard swearing. The Turkish creditor had produced a piece of paper, on which was written that he had lent a larger amount than 300 piastres to Hanistan Ereek's father—the document in question bearing the latter's signature. This the son swore was a forgery. However, the Turk had been believed, and the Armenian had been sent to prison.

"What would have been done if this case had happened in your country?" asked the Caimacan; "would you not have put the man in prison for debt?"

"No; a son is not liable for his father's debts."

"Well, each country has its own laws, which doubtless are good for the respective inhabitants," observed the governor; "but if my father had died owing a sum of money, I should have thought that it was my duty to pay it."

"A very proper resolution," I remarked; "but supposing that a Government has contracted a debt, do you not think that its successors are bound to pay the interest of the loan?"

The Caimacan stroked his beard and looked at the Cadi, who presently answered,—

"We could not put a Government in prison."

"No," I observed, "but your nation owes my nation more than a hundred millions of liras, and not only you do not pay us any interest, but you have even proposed to repudiate the debt altogether!"

"How can we pay?" said the Cadi; "we have no gold, only caime, and your people will not take that. When the Russians leave us alone, then we shall be able to pay."

"And in the meantime I suppose I am to go back to prison?" said the Armenian.

"We shall see," said the Caimacan gravely; "the law must be carried out."

I have, perhaps, given the above case more prominence than it deserves, but I have done so

because in this instance the governor of Divriki and a Christian were confronted in my presence, and the Armenian made his complaint without the slightest hesitation or fear. Now if the Christians had been so ill-treated as some of their co-religionists would have had me believe Hanistan Ereek would not have been likely to have dared to come forward and find fault with the Cadi of his town, who had adjudicated upon the matter.

According to the governor, the people in his district had not shown much readiness to go to the war. In some of the villages, the redif soldiery were very reluctant to leave their homes, and could only be made to do so by the Zaptiehs of the province, who were most of them engaged at present in this duty.

"Why do you not give the Armenians arms?" I inquired.

"They would turn them against us, and join the Russians," was the governor's reply. "In some districts which are very near Russia, and where the Armenians have the opportunity of seeing the Russians as they are, and not as they pretend to be, the Christians prefer being under the Turkish rule; but the Armenians in our central provinces are constantly being tampered with by Russian

agents. If we were to give the Christians arms, Allah only knows what would take place!"

I left Divriki at daybreak the following morning, and continued the march towards Arabkir.

We ascended once more into the clouds, and, after a four hours' ride, halted to bait our horses at the village of Yanoot—if, indeed, it deserves the name of village—for it consists of a few huts, and about twenty-five inhabitants make up the entire population.

Now a curious phenomenon presented itself before us. We were passing a chain of hills which traversed our track from north to south. The northern side of every height was covered with deep snow, on the southern declivities some igneous rocks were exposed to view and glared in the sun. Here the rays were so fierce that not only there was no snow, but the weather became oppressively warm. A few hundred yards further, and winter attacked us again in all its rigour. Our horses were tried to their utmost in forcing a way before them.

The road became very rugged. An immense quantity of loose sharp pebbles were lying on the track. Our horses could not see them and were constantly falling on their knees. Not a village or solitary house was met with during

our march. It was a picture of desolation. A few magpies, which from time to time flew mournfully across the path, were the only living things besides ourselves.

"Well, sir, this is a Jordan of a road," remarked my servant Radford, referring to some popular song, as the horse he rode fell down for the fifth time that morning. "That cemetery in Constantinople, where we tried the 'osses, was a bad place for riding, but it was nothing to this. Mohammed, he don't seem to take any account of it whatever. I never see such fellows as these Turks; they don't seem to be able to muster a grumble amongst them, no matter what they may have to undergo! Why, sir, some of them soldiers as we saw at Sivas had not received a day's pay for twenty-five months, and they seemed quite content and happy like; whilst, as for rations, it is true that the men fill themselves to bursting when they have the chance, but when they have to go without their grub they don't grumble! I wonder, sir, what our soldiers at Aldershot would say if they had not received a ha'p'orth of pay for two years, and had to march sometimes from morning to night, with nothing inside them save a whiff or so of tobacco?"

Radford was right in his remark about the track being a Jordan road—that is, if a Jordan road is the quintessence of everything that is stony and disagreeable. We had to lead our horses. Hour after hour sped by; we still seemed to be no nearer to any signs of Arabkir. Now we were up to our waists in snow and quagmire, and then we were lying between our horses' heels, the result of a slip from some half-hidden boulder.

At last we arrived at a spot close to the town. Here the rocks were of a crimson hue, their sides were covered with pebbles of ebon blackness. We mounted our horses, and, riding along a precipice-bounded path which leads into the long straggling city, presently halted at the house of an Armenian gentleman, who was kind enough to offer us a lodging for the night.

My host was a silk-merchant. He had started in business a very few years previous. This district being suitable for breeding silk-worms, he had speedily amassed a fortune. He was now one of the wealthiest men in the province, and not only supplied the Arabkir district with textures of his manufacture, but sent them by caravans to the limits of Asia Minor. He was very much respected by the Mohammedans in the town,

and was on the best of terms with the Caimacan. The latter, when he heard of my arrival, called, and, after salaaming my host, told him that he should stay to dinner.

The apartment set aside for my use was hung round with engravings of all the sovereigns in Europe. A book-shelf in one corner was filled with French books, none of which my host could read.

"Do you know French?" I inquired.

"No!"

"Then what is the good of those volumes to you?"

"I am sorry for my ignorance," replied the man, "but I mean to have my child sent to Constantinople; there he shall learn French, and afterwards he will be able to read to me what is inside these books. Pretty covers, are they not?" he continued, pointing to the binding. "I bought them when I was residing at Erzeroum, and the merchant told me that they were full of wisdom. I have a European servant," he added.

"A Frenchman?"

"No, a Russian."

"A Russian!"

"Yes. You may well be surprised," he said, "for there is not much love lost between the Russians

and ourselves. This man was taken prisoner during the Crimean war. When it was over he preferred remaining with us to returning to his own country."

END OF VOL. I.

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